Science and Art of Happy Living

(Traditional and Modern)

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Preface

"In ancient India, philosophy (Anvikshki) was considered as the rational, critical and illuminating review of the contents of theology, economics and political science and also as the right instrument and formation of all action and duty which helped one to achieve intellectual balance and insight as well as linguistic clarity and behavioural competence (प्रज्ञा वाक्य क्रिया वैशारदेय)." (Prof. K. Satchidanand Murty- Philosophy In India, Page (173). The Gita is perhaps the best representation of practical application of such a concept of philosophy. Kautilya was the last statesman in India to present an example of practical application of Indian philosophy. Since 2nd century B.C., there has been negligible original thinking in Indian philosophy. An age of commentary has continued during the last so many centuries. Time has come for a change. The need is being widely felt particularly since independence.

It was Professor Kalidas Bhattacharya who had drawn attention to the mechanical textual treatment of Indian philosophy without any broad perspective. He questioned its value when our philosophy has nothing to do with concrete human problems. Dr. Radhakrishnan in his book Indian Philosophy Vol. II had stated, "Indian Philosophy today should be made alive and real so as to become what it should be- one of the great formative elements in human progress, by relating the immensely increased knowledge of modern science to the ancient ideals of Indian Philosophy." (Page 780)

In 1978, University Grants Commission had appointed a small committee of four eminent Professors of philosophy from Indian Universities to free the Indian philosophy from this academic stagnation and cultural subjugation. The Committee suggested as under :-

a) Indian Philosophy should make one aware of India's very rich and varied philosophical heritage.

b) It should present what is universal and best philosophical thought irrespective of the time and country in which it originated and developed.

c) It should enable one to choose or develop an ideology capable of supporting a system of values adequate to one's present needs.

d) It should encourage asking of questions which have roots in the lived life of the questioner and pursuit of those questions in a spirit of freedom. Philosophical problems must be those arising at present out of one's own life and thinking.

This book is an outcome of a very humble and small step in that direction. It deals with the problem of "Suffering" which incidentally is the problem of man today and has been the central problem of the Indian philosophers and saints since very ancient times.

Obviously, the Gita serves as the most appropriate starting point as it presents the suffering soul of Arjun seeking guidance from Lord Krishna to get rid of his suffering. Lord Krishna treated the subject in a very comprehensive manner in context with psychological, philosophical, social, spiritual and practical aspects of life during those times.

In the Gita, Shri Krishna presented a detailed analysis of the world in which man lives- including the gross and subtle natural environment in the universe, the inner life of man, the expectations of the society and the philosophical thought as it existed at that time. This was a comprehensive narration of the world of man. Against this background, Shri Krishna placed before Arjun, the causes which led to suffering of man. Then he suggested the path which could lead to the end of suffering and attainment of happiness. However, Lord Krishna presented these sublime ideas in the light of the aims of human life as visualised during that age.

The book follows the same pattern, bringing in the ancient philosophical knowledge as well as the modern knowledge of physical and social sciences. There is no attempt to impose any particular ideology or thought system. An effort has been made to present all points of view- ancient, modern, oriental, occidental, and then leaving it to the youth to make his own choice in view of his own experiences. The book presents a simple and straight forward philosophy of life suited to the present times.

The draft had been presented to eight scholars from various fields with rich life experience to review and offer their suggestions so as to

make the material relevant, useful and authentic. Their suggestions were discussed by the group and necessary modifications were made in the original draft.

The book is meant for the students and youths on the thresholds of adolescence and adulthood who need such knowledge the most. Every effort has been made to keep the language and style suited to the age group. Effort has also been made to avoid all controversies so as to suit an average Indian.

This may be the first attempt of its kind. So there could be many slips. A sympathetic consideration is, therefore, requested. Suggestions for improvement are earnestly invited.

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About the Book

Traditional Science and Art of Happy Living

Part I- Background

It gives a brief background of the Battle of Mahabharat.

Part II- Sermons of the Gita

168 Shlokas have been selected from the Gita depending on their importance in the message of the Gita and their relevance to the present day conditions. (Appendix II)

Parts III- Message of the Gita

It presents a very brief summary of the main ideas presented in the Gita which are relevant and useful for man today.

Modern Science and Art of Happy Living

Part IV- World of Man and Science of Happy Living.

Part V- Road to Happiness and Art of Happy Living.

Part IV and Part V present a commentary on the message of the Gita. The content is characterised by the following special features :

a. The main concern of the Gita is the spiritual emancipation of man, while the main emphasis in this book is on happiness in the life of man and a balance in worldly success and spiritual salvation.

b. The sequence of presentation of chapters in the Gita is in conformity with the nature of knowledge as it existed during the Mahabharat period. So, there are chapters on topics like Karma yoga, Gyan yoga, Bhakti yoga, Puroshottam yoga, Moksha, Sanyas yoga etc., whereas the chapters in the commentary are in conformity with the nature of knowledge prevalent today, e.g., cosmic power, universe, man, society, knowledge, etc. However, the content matter of both, the Gita and the commentary is the same. The Gita also deals with God, universe, man, society, knowledge, suffering, faith, yajna, yoga, etc. as will be evident from the details of the subject matter. (Appendix III)

c. The Gita has drawn its subject matter from the then existing scriptures, namely- Vedas and the other Shastras. Certainly, the subject matter in the commentary has been drawn from the vast knowledge of modern sciences, philosophies and spiritual experiences of saints. This wide spectrum of information gives a

comprehensive perspective to the topics under consideration. This has also ensured relevance and importance of the subject matter in the life of modern man.

d. The Gita is in the form of a sermon and it categorically asserts what is good for man, although there are attempts of integration and reconciliation of different points of view, but the commentary does not state anything as the final truth. Various views on the subject are stated and it is left to the individual to decide what appeals to him the most.

e. The whole emphasis in the commentary is on providing the latest and varied opinions on the subject relevant to modern life. The aim is to prompt the individual to think for himself of what is best for him in his situation? The ultimate aim is to get rid of suffering and attain happiness. Here is an attempt to present the traditional philosophical wisdom in the context of modern knowledge on the subject so that its relevance for modern man can be appreciated. Thus the faith of modern man is strengthened in traditional wisdom and he is not cut off from his roots. This is likely to help him to retain his ancient spiritual values, while marching ahead on the path of modernisation.

f. Every effort has been made to keep the language as simple as possible, but the complex and abstruse nature of the subject is such that at some places, the language could not be simplified further. However, wherever possible, explanations have been provided.

g. If this humble effort of relating ancient scriptural knowledge to modern scientific and philosophical knowledge and bringing out its practical implication to solve the day to day problems of modern man is welcomed and appreciated, further efforts in this direction could be made and the ancient Vedic heritage could be saved from obsolescence.

h. It is firmly believed that the knowledge contained in the Vedic scriptures, particularly in the Gita, is very relevant and useful for life even for the modern man. It is further believed that this knowledge should be imparted to the youth, before he enters an independent household life so that he can save himself from avoidable suffering and lead a happy life.

i. The aim is to inform and inspire the youth, so as to avoid suffering in life and attain happiness from the very beginning through introspection and self-transformation.

Suggestions for improvement of the book are earnestly requested.

Part-I

I-Background

The Bharat Dynasty

Long, long ago, there ruled in northern India, the Bharat dynasty. Their empire extended from present western Uttar Pradesh to Haryana. This territory, during those times was called Kuru Pradesh. From ancient times, Kuru Pradesh had been a very prosperous region. The Yamuna, the Ganges, the Saraswati and other rivers flowed through this region. Very famous kings of Bharat dynasty ruled the territory for a long time.

Once, it so happened that after the death of the ruling king, his eldest son Dhritrashtra could not be crowned as king because he was blind. So, his younger brother Pandu was asked to rule. Unfortunately, Pandu did not live long. He died in the prime of his youth. There was none to succeed Pandu as king. Dhritrashtra had one hundred sons but they were all of tender age. The sons of Pandu were also minor. Their grandfather, Bhishma, who was quite old but powerful, decided that Dhritrashtra be crowned as king and the eldest son of Pandu, Yudhishthira be made heir– apparent to succeed Dhritrashtra as and when Yudhishthira would come of age to rule.

The seeds of discord

The decision was carried out and accordingly, Dhritrashtra ascended the throne of Hastinapur. However, in the heart of his heart, he did not like Yudhishthira to be made the heir apparent. He wished his son Duryodhan to be made the heir-apparent. But he could not question the decision of his uncle, Bhishma. Duryodhan also resented the decision but he could not protest. However, he waited for an opportune moment to make his move.

Dhritrashtra had one hundred sons, eldest of whom was Duryodhan. Being the sons of the of Kuru territory, they were called Kauravas. Pandu had five sons, of whom Yudhishthira was the eldest. Distinct from the Kauravas, they were called Pandavas. To deprive Yudhishthira from his right to become king, Kauravas started plotting against Pandavas. When the young Pandavas came of

age, they became ambitious. According to the old agreement, Yudhishthira, the eldest son of Pandu, was to be crowned as the king. But Duryodhan refused to accept the old decision. He argued that he was the eldest son of the ruling king. So, in accordance with the age old tradition, he should be crowned as the king. Dhritrashtra sided with son Duryodhan. No decision could be arrived at and Dhritrashtra continued as the king. Disagreement resulted in discord and the Bharat dynasty was divided into two opposite camps–Kauravas and Pandavas. The Kauravas were rulers at that time and wielded more power. Very soon, discord resulted in hatred and ultimately into enmity between the two. Dhritrashtra and Duryodhan so managed that the Pandavas felt a danger to their lives. Duryodhan made several secret attempts to kill the five Pandavas. But they escaped and sought refuge in the nearby kingdom of Panchal. There, the Pandavas married Draupadi, the daughter of king Drupad, the king of Panchal and made acquaintance with Krishna who became their life-long friend and guide.

An agreement

On the intervention of Krishna, Duryodhan who by then had become king of Hastinapur during the absence of the Pandavas, agreed to partition the kingdom and give a small portion around Indraprastha to the Pandavas. Bhishma gave his approval to the agreement. Accordingly, Duryodhan became the ruler of Hastinapur and Yudhishthira, the ruler of Indraprastha.

Under the guidance of their patron Krishna, Pandavas established a prosperous kingdom at Indraprastha. Duryodhan could not tolerate their success and plotted for their downfall. But he dared not fight them because he knew that he could never defeat them in an open battle.

The conspiracy

Duryodhan was aware that Yudhishthira had a weakness for gambling at dice. So he invited the Pandavas to Hastinapur to play dice. He also called his maternal uncle Shakuni from Gandhara to help him in defeating the Pandavas in the game. Shakuni was a great expert in the game of dice and could cheat his rivals without being detected.

The Pandavas fell in this trap and came to Hastinapur for a dice

game. As expected Duryodhan continuously defeated the Pandavas every time, so much so that Pandavas lost everything including their kingdom, their palaces, valuables and all else. In the hope to win, Yudhishthira put himself and his four brothers on the bet. He again lost. The five Pandavas became the slaves of Duryodhan. The last hope of Pandavas was dashed when they also lost their wife Draupadi to the Kauravas.

The humiliation

Duryodhan sent his men to bring Draupadi from Indraprastha to Hastinapur. Accordingly, Draupadi was brought in the assembly where all the members of the Kuarava family and Pandava family and other nobles were present. Duryodhan wanted to disrobe Draupadi in the open court. At this point, Krishna prevented the shameful event and started negotiations for a peaceful settlement. The Pandavas had to agree to very stringent and humiliating terms including an exile for twelve years.

At the end of the period of punishment, the Pandavas returned and wanted their kingdom of Indraprastha back. But Duryodhan flatly refused. All pleadings proved useless. Even the intervention of Lord Krishna proved unsuccessful. When there was no other alternative left, the Pandavas consulted their relatives and friends. A decision was taken and they prepared for the battle to get their kingdom back.

The Battle of Mahabharat

Pandavas were famous warriors, particularly Arjun and Bhim were supreme in archery and club fighting respectively. Kings of Panchal, Varanasi and many other kingdoms were also with them. Lord Krishna agreed to become the charioteer of Arjun. Duryodhan was sure of his success because of his great warriors like Bhishma, Dronacharya, Kripacharya, Karan and others. Almost all kings of northern India, extending from Bengal to Iran, participated in the battle on one side or the other. So the battle came to be known as the battle of Mahabharat.

The two armies assembled at the battle ground of Kurukshetra, now a town in Haryana. The Gita opens with the battle-lines well drawn and the fight was just to begin.

2. The Gita

Dhritrashtra was naturally concerned to know the happenings in the battle. But he was at Hastinapur. He requested his minister Sanjay to let him know the developments. Sanjay had been endowed with a divine eye which enabled him to see the goings on at Kurukshetra. He obliged Dhritrashtra and narrated the whole event to the king. The Gita is a record of this narration from this point and the dialogue which followed between Arjun and Lord Krishna.

Author

The Gita, in its present form, is a part of the great epic Mahabharat. It appears in the Bhishma Parva of Mahabharat from Chapter XXIII to Chapter XL. These eighteen chapters have seven hundred shlokas and as an independent entity. It is known as Srimad Bhagvad Gita.

Maharishi Vyas is supposed to be the author of Mahabharat. It is not certain whether he himself composed the Epic or he compiled and edited the composition in its present form. Whatever it may be, the authorship of Mahabharat is credited to Maharishi Vyas.

Date of composition

There is no direct evidence about the period of composition of any of the Vedic literature- be it the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Sutra, Smritis or the epics. There had been no tradition in ancient India to keep record of the author or period of composition of literary works. Their dates and authorship are now determined on the basis of indirect evidences e.g. language, philosophical content, later references, etc. Still all propositions about Vedic scriptures are approximations. But it is unanimously agreed that the epics belong to a period later than that of the Upanishads but earlier than that of the Sutras. The period is roughly reckoned from 500 BC to 200 BC.

The Mahabharat

In ancient India, even before the period of Buddha, there had been a long tradition of wandering bards who moved from place to place and recited the stories of saints, kings, warriors, etc. These were interesting and inspiring stories often with a moral message. Such stories were further enriched through time by talented bards. The

core story of the Mahabharat was also one such story about the tragic end of the Kuru Dynasty.

It is believed that sometime around the 5th century BC, the story of Mahabharat was well known in northern India. At that point of time, these battle songs were collected and presented by some poetic genius in the form of a narration of about 20,000 sholkas. This was perhaps the first version of the Mahabharat. The third and the present form of Mahabharat with one lac shlokas appeared sometime around 300 BC. It is supposed to be the work of Maharishi Vyas. The first historical reference about Mahabharat is in a land-grant inscription of around 500 AD. Around 600 AD., Mahabharat was regularly recited in the Mahakaleshwar temple at Ujjain. The first edition of Mahabharat was published in 1839 from Calcutta.

It is not certain at what stage the Gita was incorporated in the Mahabharat. It is believed that the Gita was originally an independent composition. It was perhaps at the time of the final compilation around 300 B.C. that the Gita along with hundreds of other popular stories was intelligently incorporated and integrated into the main story of Mahabharat.

Historicity

It is sometimes asked whether the Gita was actually recited at the battlefield of Kurukshetra by Lord Krishna to Arjun, also whether Mahabharat itself is a historical event or a fiction. No definite and convincing answer to this question can be given because no authentic historical evidence is available to support either affirmation. But the characters, the events, the presentation are so lively, natural, true to life and appealing that their possible existence cannot be denied. Be it what it may. It is the relevance and usefulness of the content which is important to us. Both Mahabharat and the Gita creditably pass this test and that is why they are still popular.

Authenticity

Several manuscripts of Mahabharat are available in the libraries in London, Oxford, Paris, Berlin and several cities of India. There are variations in different editions. However, Bhandarkar Institute, Poona and Gita Press, Gorakhpur have published authentic editions of Mahabharat after prolonged research. So far as the Gita is

concerned, there is a commentary of the Gita by Adi Shankracharya (788 AD–800AD). The same is considered as authentic.

3. Language and Style

The Gita is written in Sanskrit language of the post-Vedic period i.e. later than 500 B.C. Its language is different from the Vedic Sanskrit and very near to the modern Sanskrit. It follows the rules of Panini Grammar in construction and syntax. Hence, it is easy to follow.

The metre used is Anustup which is very popular and musical to recite.

The style of composition is conversational. There is a dialogue between Arjun and Lord Krishna. Arjun makes a statement or asks a question and Krishna gives his reaction or answers the questions. There are several questions put by Arjun. Some of the questions are quite interesting, e.g.

a. How can I fight against my Guru, elders, relatives and friends?

b. What are the characteristics of a person of steadfast mind?

c. Why are people inclined towards sinful deeds?

d. How to control the mind?

e. What happens to a devotee who later goes astray?

Answers to these questions are very enlightening. The answers are short and to the point as well as authentic and convincing.

There are eighteen chapters and 700 shlokas. Chapters differ in length. Chapters II, XI, XVIII are comparatively longer while chapters V, VIII, XII, XV, XVI and XVII are shorter.

Sometimes it is felt that there is repetition of the same idea over and over again. It is so only with reference to important questions relating to senses and mind because these two organs are involved in all human actions.

The simplicity of language and dialogue form has made the Gita the most popular Hindu scripture. Gita Press, Gorakhpur alone has sold more than two crore copies of the book. That shows the popularity of the scripture.

The Gita has been translated in all the major Indian languages and many foreign languages also. Right from Adi Shankracharya upto Radhakrishnan, all philosophers and saints have written commentaries on the Gita. There are more than 300 famous commentaries on the Gita in the library of Gita Press Gorakhpur. The Gita is the most popular Hindu scripture acceptable to almost all denominations of Hindu religion.

In a way, its appeal is universal. Therefore, it is the only Hindu scripture popular in foreign countries.

4. Subject Matter of the Gita

Subject matter of almost all ancient Indian scriptures– be they Vedic, Jain, Buddhist or Puranas– is the same. They deal with suffering and its end. There are two common statements, viz.

a. There is suffering in the world.

b. This suffering can be put to an end.

There are two questions asked, viz.

a. What are the causes of suffering?

b. How can suffering be put to an end?

All scriptures give their own answers to these two questions. The answers, of course, differ from one scripture to the other. Some deal with the problem philosophically, some logically and some psychologically. The Gita treats the problem from all the three points of view.

In a way, the Gita presents all the major trends of thought on the subject of suffering, prevalent at any time. It is a comprehensive treatment of the problem. Therefore, sometimes it appears that the Gita presents different propositions at different places. But no single proposition can suit every person. So, it gives a proposition which suits the particular situation.

The main emphasis is on the following points to end the problem of suffering.

1. Control on sense organs.

2. Control on mind through practice of yoga.

3. An attitude of detachment towards worldly affairs.
4. Development of intellect.
5. Giving up egoistic attitude.
6. Not expecting pre-meditated result from actions.
7. Surrender to God.

* * *

Part II

Sermons of the Gita

Chapter-1

Perils of War

The Battlefield of Kurukshetra

The Gita opens with a question by Dhritrashtra to Sanjay asking him to describe the details of the battle at Kurukshetra between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. The war was just to begin. The great warriors of the two armies blew their conches to declare their preparedness for the battle.

When everything was ready, Arjun requested Shri Krishna to take his chariot in the middle of the two armies, so that he could see the warriors whom he would have to face in the battle. Accordingly, Krishna drove the chariot forward and stationed it in the middle of the armies of the Pandavas and the Kauravas from where Arjun could have a full view of the warriors of the two armies. Arjun saw all around himself and found relatives, friends and well-wishers on both sides– ready to kill each other. Arjun was greatly disappointed and all his heroism sank within him when he visualised the dangerous consequences of such a war. (28, 29)

Despondency of Arjun

Arjun expressed his views to Shri Krishna thus:

a. What is the use of acquiring a kingdom by killing our respected elders, dear relatives, youths, friends and well wishers? Killing is not good in any way. (37)

b. The Kauravas are blinded by greed and hatred and so they see no sin in killing one's relatives. But we are wise enough to realise the consequences of such a misadventure. Therefore, we should desist from committing such a crime. (28,39)

c. With the destruction of our families, our age old traditions will also disappear. This will lead to indiscipline, chaos, fall in morality, anarchy and corruption, particularly among women. They will become unchaste. The ultimate result will be the birth of a sinful and immoral generation. Therefore, we should not commit such a sin. (40, 41)

d. What pleasure will it give us to acquire this bloody kingdom when so many of us for whom we are fighting this battle, shall be no more? (45)

e. It is also not certain that we shall win. So why go in for this sinful misadventure. I would prefer to die at the hands of our respected elders and relatives rather than kill them. Knowing all this fully well, we should not commit such a sin and go to hell. (46)

A Difficult Choice

A difficult situation arose where a person is seen to be moved by strong feelings and uncertain of the right course of action. The question for Arjun was to fight or not to fight. Circumstances had placed Arjun in a situation where the two clear cut courses were open to him. Both had their obvious merits and demerits. In such a situation, it is normally difficult to decide which the right course is.

Every person faces such situations in his life almost everyday. At every step, there are equally difficult alternative choices and the person has to make a better choice. If the choice is correct, it leads to harmony, prosperity and happiness. But if the choice is wrong, the results can be disastrous. The internal debate and confusion in the mind of man goes on resulting in continued indecision or a hasty wrong decision.

The question is how to make an intelligent and correct choice out of the many alternatives open in the situation. Shri Krishna attempts to present a number of criteria which should guide a person in his life in making right choices. The subsequent chapters unfold a marvellous conversation or rather an intelligent debate, argument by argument– philosophical, psychological, social, personal between a learned benefactor (Krishna) and an equally earnest seeker of Truth (Arjun).

1. Battlefield of Kurukshetra

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता: युयुत्सव:।
मामका: पाण्डवा: च एव किम् अकुर्वत संजय।।१.१।।[1]

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1. Dharmakshetre

Dhritrashtra says to Sanjay, "O Sanjay, my sons and the sons of Pandu, who are desirous for a battle, have assembled together on the sacred field of Kurukshetra. Tell me what they have done?"

2. Despondency of Arjun

अर्जुन उवाच

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतसः।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम्।।१.३८।।
कथं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम्।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्भिर्जनार्दन।।१.३९।।[1]

Arjun says, "O Krishna, although these people with their minds blinded with greed do not see the evils of destruction of their own race and the sin resulting from enmity towards their friends, yet we who clearly see the sin involved in the destruction of the family should desist from committing such a sin."

अर्जुन उवाच

अहो बत महत्पापं कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम्।
यद् राज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यताः।।१.४५।।

Arjun continued, "Alas! How sad! Impelled by greed for the pleasures of a kingdom, we are so intent to kill our own relatives and thus, involve ourselves in a great sin."

The first two words of this first shloka of the first chapter of the Gita, viz. *Dharmakshetre kurukshetre* can also imply "*Kshetre Kshetre Dharma Kuru*" which means "*Perform your ordained duties in every field of your life.*" This is the real message of the Gita. The rest of the presentation is an explanation of how best this can be done.

Dharmakshetre kurukshetre could also refer to this world where man is expected to perform his ordained duties. While doing so, generally there is a conflict going on in the mind of the individual between two or more alternative options, and he is not able to decide whether to do this or that. The mind becomes a battlefield of opposite forces and the person faces a dilemma in his life as was faced by Arjun on the battlefield of Kuruskhetra.

1. Arjun requested Shri Krishna to take the chariot in the middle of the two armies so that he could have a look at the warriors who had assembled in the battlefield against him. Accordingly, Shri Krishna stationed the chariot at an advantageous point from where Arujna could have a good look at the two armies. Arjun saw relatives and friends on both sides ready to kill one another. So, he was dismayed and expressed his reaction to Shri Krishna in these words.

संजय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वार्जुनः संख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत्।

विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसंविग्नमानसः॥१.४७॥

Sanjay said to Dhritrashtra, "Sir, having said so, Arjun was overwhelmed with sorrow. He dropped his bow and arrows and sat in the rear part of the chariot."

Questions

1. Who are the two persons engaged in the dialogue?
2. In which state of India is Kurukshetra located?
3. To which period of history the story relates?
4. Why is Kurukshetra called Dharma Kshetra?
5. Who are the persons engaged in the dialogue in shloka nos. 38-39?
6. What is the relationship between the two?
7. Why did Arjun refuse to participate in the battle?
8. Life is sometimes called a battlefield. Why is it so?

Chapter II

Duties Must be Performed

Lord Krishna did not agree with Arjuna. There was an illuminating discussion between the two. Arguments of both sides are quite interesting. The following points are well explained in this chapter by Lord Krishna :

1. Body and soul are two different constituents of man. Body is subject to change viz., childhood, youth, old age and death. But soul is eternal and ever the same. It transmigrates from one body to another body.
2. One should not shy away from his ordained duties, however, unpleasant such duties may be.
3. Every one must perform his prescribed duties unmindful of their consequences which may follow from such performance.

4. Such duty-performance is called "Nishkam karma" or Duty performed with Detachment.
5. This is possible only when one is not swayed by emotions and looks at the situation objectively with a calm and concentrated mind.
6. Equanimity and stability of mind are the keys to success in life.
7. Too much involvement in pleasures of the senses leads to suffering. Control on mind is the royal road to happiness.

1. Immortality of Soul

श्रीभगवानुवाच

कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम्।
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन।।२.२।।

The Lord said, "O Arjun, how has this infatuation overtaken you at this inopportune moment! It is neither worthy of noble souls nor it will help you to attain heaven. But it is likely to tarnish your fair reputation."

श्रीभगवानुवाच

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे।
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः।।२.११।।

The Lord said, "You are worrying for those who should not be worried about. Obviously, you seem to speak words of wisdom. However, the wise men do not grieve for those who are dead or even for those who are yet to die."

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति।।२.१३।।

"Just as the embodied soul in this body passes through childhood, youth and old age, so also it (the soul) passes into another body. A wise man is not perplexed by all that."

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचिन्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे।।२.२१।।

"The soul is never born nor does it die at any time. It is unborn, eternal, permanent and exists from the very beginning. When the body is killed, the soul does not get killed."

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही।।२.२२।।

"Just as a person throws away old worn out clothes and puts on new clothes, similarly, the embodied soul casts away the worn out body and takes on other new one."

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः।
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः।।२.२३।।

"Weapons cannot cut the soul, fire does not burn it; water does not make it wet, nor can the wind make it dry."

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च।
नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः।।२.२४।।

"It (the soul) cannot be cut, burnt, drenched or dried because it is eternal, omnipresent, stable, immortal and ever-existing."

2. Performance of Ordained Duties[1]

अथ चेत् त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि।
ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि।।२.३३।।

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1. **Ordained Duties**

A baby is born in a region, religion, race, culture, physical environment and in a particular family. That gives the baby its identification for the whole life.

The baby is born with some potential abilities and capacities which he gets developed in due course of time in its peculiar social and cultural environment. That also determines the nature and type of his personality– particularly during infancy, childhood and adolescence.

When he is about to cross his adolescence, he begins to take control of his life in his own hands and starts taking important decisions of his life himself– either alone or in consultation with others.

At this stage, he finds himself related to many other persons by virtue of blood relationship, neighbourhood, friendship and for several other reasons. All relationships involve interaction, give and take and mutual obligations.

These obligations are determined by emotional involvement, social customs, moral code and the state laws. They constitute rights and duties. The duties of an individual towards others, constitute his ordained duties.

It is obligatory for an individual to know what these obligations are and how best to fulfil them. These obligations are known as ordained duties of an individual.

They constitute the bed-rock of every society and their fulfilment ensures the welfare and progress of the society as well as of the individuals.

"If you do not participate in such a righteous war, you will run away from your ordained duty, lose your good reputation and will also commit a sin."

अकीर्तिं चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम्।
सम्भावितस्य चाकीर्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते॥२.३४॥

"People will recount for long about your ever-lingering disrepute and for a respected person such a disgrace is worse than death."

सुखदु:खे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि॥२.३८॥

"Considering alike both pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, get ready for battle. By doing so, you will not incur any sin."

3. Supremacy of Action over Inaction

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि॥२.४७॥

"Action alone is within your discretion and never the result of the action. Do not remain focussed on the result of actions, nor have any inclination towards inaction."

4. Evenness of Mind

योगस्थ: कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनंजय।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्यो: समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते॥२.४८॥[1]

"O Arjun, while giving up attachment, the results remain concentrated on the performance of your obligatory duties with equanimity in success and failure. Evenness of mind is called yoga."

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1. **Evenness of Mind** समत्व भाव

Evenness of mind means an impartial mind- free from biases, prejudices, subjectivity, pre-conceived notions, and neutral between alternative propositions, not swayed by emotions, likes and dislikes, etc. An even mind looks at different propositions on the basis of their merit, based on objective facts. It is an honest mind, it is a just mind. It neither favours nor frowns. It loves none, it hates none. It is calm, cool, poised and in perfect equilibrium. It is in harmony with everything. Only such a mind can judge with dispassion. It does not flicker. Its flame is steady all the time. It is not attached to anything except truth. It is even, it is equidistant from all propositions. It is in equanimity. Wisdom and prolonged practice of meditation lead to such evenness of mind.

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते।

तस्माद् योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्॥२.५०॥[1]

"One who has well-established himself in such wisdom, he is not answerable for his good or bad deeds in this world. Therefore, you should practise yoga for evenness of mind and bring perfection to your actions."

कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः।

जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम्॥२.५१॥

"The wise, through this evenness of mind, renounce the fruits of their actions and get freed from the fetters of rebirth. Thus, they attain blissful supreme state without undergoing any suffering."

5. Man of Stable Intellect- Sthit Pragya

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला।

समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि॥२.५३॥

"At this moment, your intellect is in a state of confusion on account of the conflicting views of scriptures that you have read. When your intellect becomes firm about your convictions and your mind becomes stable, then you attain equanimity."

प्रजहाति यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान्।

आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते॥ २.५५॥[2]

"When a person has completely given up all his desires from his

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1. **Perfection in actions**
   Perfection in action means the following :-
   a. Excellence in actions, great efficiency, high quality and good results.
   b. They neither elate nor frustrate. They neither inflate the ego nor depress it. They do not lead to anxiety, worry, disappointment or disillusionment. Instead they leave you calm, cool, satisfied and contented.
   This is possible when your actions are "Detached Actions" or Nishkam Karma.

2. **Stable in wisdom**
   If a person always remains in a state of evenness of mind, he is stated to have reached a stage of stability in wisdom. Such a person is always calm and cool. He cannot be provoked or made to lose his temper.
   In due course of time, he always stays in wisdom and in truth. He immediately reaches the truth in any complicated proposition. His intuition gets developed. He directly reaches the truth without going through the usual cognitive process. Intuition is the inner faculty of perception of truth. Such intellect is called Ritambhra Buddhi by Patanjali (Yoga Sutra I.48)

mind and from his divine mind remains satisfied in his human mind, he is said to be of a stable intellect."

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वेश:।

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता।।२.५८।।

"Just as a tortoise withdraws all his limbs into his shell, similarly when a person withdraws all his senses away from the worldly objects, he is stated to be well established in his intellect."

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्पर:।

वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता।।२.६१।।

"Controlling all his organs and with a steady mind, a person should meditate and remember God. When a person gains control over his sense organs, his intellect becomes stable."

ध्यायतो विषयान् पुंस: सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते।

सङ्गात् संजायते काम: कामात् क्रोधोऽभिजायते।।२.६२।।

"When a person continues to think in his mind about the objects of senses, he develops a desire for those objects. From desire springs craving. When this craving is not fulfilled, it produces anger."

क्रोधाद् भवति सम्मोह: सम्मोहात् स्मृतिविभ्रम:।

स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात् प्रणश्यति।।२.६३।।

"From anger arises bewilderment; from bewilderment arises loss of memory; from loss of memory arises the destruction of intelligence, and with destruction of intelligence, the person perishes."

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनु विधीयते।

तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाम्भसि।।२.६७।।

"When the mind of a person runs after his wandering senses, it carries away his intelligence just as the fast blowing wind carries away a boat on waters."

Questions

1. On what grounds, has Krishna disagreed with Arjun?
2. What part of man is eternal?
3. Which part of man is always undergoing change?

4. What are the characteristic features of 'Soul' as stated in the Gita?
5. What is meant by "Ordained Duties?"
6. What are your ordained duties at your present stage of life as a student? Mention any five.
7. What is meant by "Nishkam Karma?"
8. What is meant by "Evenness of mind" or Equanimity?
9. What are the characteristics of a 'Sthit Pragya' or a man of stable wisdom?
10. What is meant by 'craving'?

Chapter III

Perform actions with a detached mind

The importance of performance of ordained duties had been emphasised in the second chapter. In this chapter, the following points have been dealt with about duty performance :-

1. Performance of worldly actions is a compulsive necessity for man because of his inherent nature.
2. This inherent nature of man finds expression through his cravings.
3. These cravings find manifestation through the five sense organs and five motor organs.
4. These ten organs move outward towards the objects of the world and get involved with these objects through attraction. Through such involvement, the sense and motor organs seek pleasure.
5. Man should not allow himself to get entangled in such pleasures of the senses beyond a limit and should exercise control on his mind. Moderation is necessary in everything.
6. Man should emulate the actions of saintly persons or should know his personal ordained duties through a study of the scriptures.

7. Passion or craving for sensual pleasures is the root cause of going astray and commitment of sin.
8. Man should not allow his sense organs, motor organs, mind and intellect to be swayed by passion.

1. Actions are unavoidable in life

श्री भगवानुवाच

न हि कश्चित् क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत्।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः॥३.५॥

The Lord says, "No one remains without doing some work even for a moment. Compelled by impulses which are born of nature everyone is prompted to remain engaged in action."

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन्।
इन्द्रियार्थान् विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते॥३.६॥

"One who apparently restrains his motor organs from action, but constantly broods about the worldly objects mentally, is a person of deluded understanding and he is called a hypocrite."

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन।
कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते॥३.७॥

"O Arjun, whosoever, with a detached mind and controlling his sense organs and motor organs engages in action, he excels all others."

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः।
शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्येदकर्मणः॥३.८॥

"Therefore, you perform your ordained duties. Action is superior to inaction. By giving up action, you cannot even maintain your body."

एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः।
अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति॥३.१६॥

"O Arjun, one who does not perform in his life the traditional duties prescribed by the scriptures, he definitely leads a sinful life. Such a person lives in vain. He lives only for the satisfaction of his sensual pleasures."

2. Perform actions with a detached mind

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर।

असक्तो ह्याचरन् कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः।।३.१९।।

"Therefore, you should always fulfil your obligatory duties with a detached mind. A person fulfilling his obligations without any attachment always reaches the highest."

यद् यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत् तदेवेतरो जनः।

स यत् प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते।।३.२१।।

"Whatsoever a great man does, other persons also do the same. Whatever standards are set by the great men, they are accepted and followed by the common man."

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम्।

जोषयेत् सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान् युक्तः समाचरन्।।३.२६।।

"If some ignorant persons engage themselves in actions even with attachment, a wise man should not create confusion in their minds. The wise themselves should remain engaged in desirable actions and persuade others also to follow them."

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि।

प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति।।३.३३।।

"All persons are impelled to follow their own nature as determined by the three gunas. The wise also follow their nature accordingly, although they are free from worldly attachment. Forced restraint will be of no avail."

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थे रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ।

तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत् तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ।।३.३४।।[1]

"Inclination of love and hate towards worldly objects is rooted in our senses (in accordance with our past Sanskars) which result in attachment or aversion towards worldly objects. One should not be

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1. **Sanskars**– Sanskars are the impressions which our actions, thoughts and feelings leave on our mind and intellect. If such impressions are repeated frequently, they permanently grip our mind and intellect and slip into our unconscious. We no longer remain conscious of them. However, they exert their influence on all our future thoughts and actions. They constitute a part of our character and personality.

swayed by any of these two because both are obstacles for a detached attitude."

3. Why does a person commit sin?

अर्जुन उवाच

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः।
अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः॥३.३६॥

Arjun said, "O my Lord! Then impelled by what does a man engage himself in sinful actions? It appears that he is being forced into sin against his will."

श्रीभगवानुवाच

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः।
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम्॥३.३७॥

The Lord said, "It is craving inflamed by passion (Rajoguna). Anger ensues from it. Passion is insatiable and very wicked. Know this to be the enemy which prompts man to commit sin."

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते।
एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम्॥३.४०॥

"The senses, the mind and the intellect are said to be the seats of passion. The passion clouds the intellect and deludes the embodied self."

4. How to avoid sin?

तस्मात् त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ।
पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम्॥३.४१॥

"O Arjun! In the first instance, bring your senses under your control. Then with firm determination, put an end to this vicious passion which is the destroyer of intelligence and wisdom."

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः॥३.४२॥[1]

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1. Self- Self refers to our subtle body which is said to be constituted by the senses, mind, intellect, ego and the unconscious. Together, this self controls our whole life activities. Self also refers to the Soul.

   It is said that there are two Selves in the body- one the human mind and the other "Parmatma" (Divine mind). These two selves are like two birds sitting on the same body-tree.

"It is said that the senses are superior to the gross body. Superior to the senses is the mind. Intellect is superior even to the mind. Self (soul) is said to be superior to the intellect."

एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना।
जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम्॥३.४३॥

"O Arjuna, thus understanding well that your real self (soul) is beyond the senses, mind and intellect, restrain your mind with your vigilant self (soul). Slay this enemy in the form of passion which is very difficult to conquer."

Questions

1. What attracts man towards the objects of the world?
2. Is it bad to get attracted towards the objects of the world? Support your answer with reason.
3. Who is called a "hypocrite" in shloka No III-6?
4. How is the nature of a person determined?
5. What are the three gunas mentioned in the Gita?
6. Name the three gunas and their characteristics.
7. Study the table of Gunas under Chapter IV of Part IV and find out the nature of your personality.
8. How can a person improve the nature of his personality?
9. How can a person become the master of his destiny?
10. What is meant by Sanskar?
11. Why should not we be swayed by love or hate towards persons or objects?
12. Why does a person commit sin?
13. What are the seats of passion?
14. Rank self (Soul), senses, intellect and mind in the order of their superiority.

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया, समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्य, नश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति॥

Svetasvatar. IV.6, Rig. I.164.20 Atharva IX 14.20

"Two birds are always having their abode on the same tree and they have friendly feelings. Out of the two, one eats the fruits of the tree enjoying their taste. However, the other only remains as a witness without tasting the fruits."

15. What is meant by Self?
16. Who is the greatest enemy of the Self?
17. What is the difference between 'Desire' and 'Craving'? Which one is to be avoided and why?

Chapter IV

Righteousness must prevail

Performance of prescribed duties is emphasised in this chapter also. These duties differ from person to person. It is explained how the prescribed duties are determined for different persons. On the basis of their attributes or qualities, people have been divided into four categories called Varnas (not castes). Accordingly, they have been assigned their ordained duties in order to ensure stability, harmony, prosperity and development of the individual and the society. These "Ordained Duties" are called "Dharma."

When people fail to perform their duties, Dharma or righteousness declines and the virtuous people suffer. Lord Krishna says, "Under such circumstances, I incarnate myself to re-establish the order of righteousness and punish the evil-doers."

One who shirks from his assigned duties is a sinner because he is getting all the advantages from the society without contributing anything towards the welfare of the society. As a Kshatriya, it is the duty of Arjun to oppose and root out injustice. Lord Krishna urges Arjun to participate in the battle and perform his duty.

Performance of one's assigned duties with equanimity and without attachment or craving or eagerness for favourable results or personal motive is a great sacrifice and such an action is called yajna. Whatever may be the form of such an action, it is a sacrifice for the society or yajna. The Lord says, "All such persons who perform their ordained duties reach Me although they follow different paths. They are all equally dear to Me."

1. Incarnation of God

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत।

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम्॥४.७॥

Lord said, "O Arjun! Whenever there is a decline of righteousness, I incarnate myself for the re-establishment of righteousness."

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम्।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे॥४.८॥

"For the protection of the virtuous, for the destruction of the vicious and for the establishment of righteousness, I incarnate myself from age to age."

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम्।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः॥४.११॥

"In whatever way men approach Me, I reward them accordingly because all men, whatever may be the form of their actions, always follow My path."

2. Four Varnas

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः। ४.१३॥[1]

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1. **Varna**
The word Varna literally means 'colour'. It could refer to the colour of the aura of a person which is supposed to be a radiated extension of the physical body as a manifestation of inner character and personality. Initially, Varna was not determined by birth but declared later, on the basis of observed and anticipated potentialities of the child. If Sattva guna predominated and Rajas and Tamas were subordinate in a person in that order, he was of the nature of a Brahmin. If Rajas guna predominated and Sattava and Tamas were subordinate in a person in that order, he was of the nature of a Kshatriya. If Rajas predominated and Tamas and Sattava were subordinate in a person, in that order, he was of the nature of a Vaishya. If Tamas predominated and Rajas and Sattva were subordinate in a person, in that order, he was of the nature of a Shudra.
In due course of time, distinct cultural traditions and life styles developed among the four Varnas compatible with the nature of their ordained duties which the members of the Varnas were expected to perform. This influence of early cultural tradition helped a person in the inculcation of capabilities for the performance of those very ordained duties of the Varna. Gradually, Varnas came to be assigned on the basis of birth. Later, it assumed the name of caste (and sub-caste within a ca-te) completely different from the original concept of Varna. What we see today in India is a completely distorted version of the ancient institution of Varnas. (See also chapter XVIII 41-45)
However, now-a-days the division of persons in different categories has been done on the basis of their occupation, which is known as National Classification

The Lord says, "The four fold order of four varnas (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras) had been created in accordance with the potential capabilities of men and the nature of work which suited them the best."

3. Who is a wise man?

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भा: कामसंकल्पवर्जिता:।

ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहु: पण्डितं बुधा:।।४.१९।।[1]

"One whose actions in life are free from craving, free from pleasures of the senses and are performed in a natural way without expecting any pre-meditated consequent results, his actions get dissolved in the fire of his wisdom. He is known as a wise man."

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रह:।

शारीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन् नाप्नोति किल्बिषम्।।४.२१।।

"One who is free from craving for pleasure, who has full control on his senses, mind and ego and who performs his actions only for the sustenance of his body, is free from all afflictions."

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते।

तत् स्वयं योगसंसिद्ध: कालेनात्मनि विन्दति।।४.३८।।

"Undoubtedly, there is nothing in the world more purifying than wisdom (Gyan). Those who have perfected themselves through the continued practice of meditation, automatically attain such wisdom in due course of time."

श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्पर: संयतेन्द्रिय:।

ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति।।४.३९।।

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of Occupations. Psychology has its own categories of individuals, on the basis of aptitude, determined through the administration of a standardised aptitude test.

1. Consequences of our actions bind us only under the following circumstances :–
   a. We crave to enjoy the pleasures of the senses and undertake actions keeping the same in view.
   b. We expect some pre-meditated benefits from our actions.
   c. We perform our actions with an egoistic attitude.
   d. We have some selfish motive and try to achieve that aim under all circumstances by hook or by crook.

Actions of a wise man are free from the above afflictions. So, his actions do not bind him.

"One who has full control over his senses and is endowed with faith, gains wisdom easily. Having gained wisdom, he quickly attains supreme peace."

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति।

नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः।।४.४०।।

"The ignorant, the faithless and the doubting self (doubtful) ruins himself. He achieves nothing- neither in this world nor in the next world. Nor does he enjoy happiness."

तस्मादज्ञानसम्भूतंहृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः।

छित्त्वैनं संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत।।४.४२।।

"Therefore, O Arjun, destroy with the sword of knowledge these misgivings of yours produced from ignorance. Engage in yoga of action. Arise."

Questions

1. What is meant by 'Incarnation'?
2. When does incarnation take place?
3. What are the aims of incarnation?
4. What is meant by 'Varna'?
5. What are the four Varnas mentioned in the Gita?
6. What is the basis for determination of Varna of a person?
7. What are the characteristics of a wise man as stated in shloka IV-19 ?
8. When does an action become the cause of our binding to the world?
9. How can one be free from such binding?
10. What purifies our intellect most of all?
11. How can one purify one's intellect?

Chapter V

Peace of Mind

In this chapter, Arjun seeks a clarification from Lord Krishna. "My Lord! On the one hand, you ask me to perform my prescribed duties while on the other hand you ask me not to expect any pre-meditated reward from my actions. How can we reconcile these two opposite positions? Please explain this to me clearly."

Lord Krishna says, "Perform your ordained duties as a part of your day to day life and not with an egoistic attitude or to achieve a particular pre-meditated reward." This philosophy of Nishkam Karma or "detached action" is the corner stone of the Gita and the most important message of Indian Philosophy.

Know your potential capabilities– physical, mental, social and spiritual and develop them upto their optimum level.

As a member of the human society born in a particular social setting, you have some prescribed social obligations towards yourself, your family, your society and humanity. Know these obligations. These obligations evolve and change with age and circumstances. Clearly know what these obligations are for you. They are your prescribed duties. Awareness of these duties constitutes true knowledge which you must acquire and be free from confusion.

1. Prepare yourself physically, mentally and socially to perform these duties.
2. Perform your prescribed duties sincerely and seriously, without egoistic vanity or achieving some pre-meditated reward by hook or by crook.
3. Every action has a number of sub-actions. Perform each sub-action also with the same devotion and sincerity. As a consequence of this, final result can be expected to follow naturally with a favourable ending.
4. The final result of an action depends on a number of factors, all of which are not under our control. If the results are not in accordance with our expectations, we need not feel dejected or depressed, since we have performed our duties to the best of our capability.

5. If we do not do so, we will always be worried and unhappy.
6. Enjoy the process of leading such a life and have a feeling of "lived well."

"Each one of us, with or without the help of others, should develop himself in his true form and Right functions and lead his life in a spirit of dedication and love."

1. The Way to Supreme peace

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः।
सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते।।५.७।।[1]

"One who is devoted to the performance of his ordained duties, who has subdued his body and senses, whose mind in pure, and who has identified his self with the self of all beings, even while performing actions, he remains untainted by his actions."

ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा।।५.१०।।

"One who while fulfilling his obligations dedicates them to God and he himself remains unattached to his actions, he is not tainted by sin, just as a lotus leaf even while remaining in water remains untouched by water."

युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम्।
अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते।।५.१२।।

"A man of actions while renouncing the fruits of his actions, attains supreme peace. But a person who performs actions, prompted by personal motives, remains in bondage because he remains attached to the fruits of his actions."

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः।
छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः।।५.२५।।

"Those saintly persons whose sins have been destroyed, whose doubts have been resolved, who are self-controlled and who are always engaged in the welfare of all beings, they attain supreme peace."

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1. "Who has Identified his self with the self of all beings?"
It means that he considers all persons feelings, thinking, behaviour etc. like himself. He has empathy for all. When he sees somebody in pain, he feels his pain and tries to relieve him of his pain. When someone has achieved success and he is happy, he shares his happiness.

स्पर्शान् कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांश्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भ्रुवो:।
प्राणापानौ समौ कृत्वा नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ॥५.२७॥
यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायण:।
विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो य: सदा मुक्त एव स:॥५.२८॥

"Throwing out all thoughts of worldly sense-enjoyment, fixing his gaze between his eye-brows, balancing the inhale and exhale of breath, controlling his senses, mind and intellect, always pursuing the path of salvation and always free from craving, fear and anger, such a person is ever liberated."

Questions

1. How can one live in this world like a lotus flower in a pond?
2. What is meant by 'सर्वभूत आत्म भूत?'
3. In what way, should one perform one's duites so as not to get bound to the world?
4. How does a person attain supreme peace?
5. State briefly the meditation excerise mentioned in shlokas, V. 27-28.

Chapter VI

How to control the Mind

In this chapter, Lord Krishna describes simple methods of acquiring control on senses, mind, and intellect. Krishna says, "Man himself is his best friend and his worst enemy. It is for him to make his life a valley of flowers or a vale of tears. However, he should not degrade himself. He should make his life sublime."

A simple exercise for meditation is prescribed for concentration of mind.

Krishna also assures Arjun that sincere efforts in the practice of yoga never go waste. The beneficial effects are carried forward by the Self (soul) from one life to the next incarnated life. Therefore, it is never too late to begin. One should continue his efforts of self-improvement upto the last breath of his life. Such beneficial efforts are never lost.

1. Man is his own best friend

श्रीभगवानुवाच

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत्।

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः॥६.५॥[1]

"A person should lift himself by his own efforts and should not degrade himself. A person is his own friend and is also his own enemy."

बन्धुरात्माऽऽत्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवाऽऽत्मना जितः।

अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत्॥६.६॥

"One who has acquired control over one's senses, mind and intellect, he is his own friend. But one who has no control over one's mind, his mind acts as his enemy."

2. How to meditate?

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः।

नात्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम्॥६.११॥

तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः।

उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्यात् योगमात्मविशुद्धये॥६.१२॥

"A person should fix his seat at a clean place. It should be neither too high nor too low. The seat should be covered with sacred grass, a deer skin and a cloth– one over the other."

"Taking his seat at that place, concentrating his mind and controlling his senses and actions, one should practise meditation for self purification."

समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्नचलं स्थिरः।

सम्प्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन्॥६.१३॥

"Let him firmly hold his body, head and neck erect and still, gaze at the tip of the nose without looking in any direction."

प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः।

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1 One who has control over his senses, mind and intellect, such a person is his own friend and well-wisher. One who has no control over his senses, mind and intellect, he is his own enemy because by letting senses, mind and intellect have a free run, one acts as his own enemy. While under control, they serve man, but while left free, they land him in untold suffering.

मनः संयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्परः।।६.१४।।

"Serene, fearless, firm in the vow of celibacy, with his mind under control and fixed on Me, the devotee should dedicate himself to Me alone."

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु।

युक्तस्वप्नाववोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा।।६.१७।।

"Yoga can be accomplished only by a person who is moderate in eating and recreation who is restrained in his actions and whose sleeping and working timings are well regulated. Such yoga destroys all the sufferings."

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता।

योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः।।६.१९।।

"A yogi who has disciplined his mind and who practises meditation, is like a lamp which does not flicker in a windless place."

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम्।

ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत्।।६.२६।।

"The devotee should withdraw his wandering and unsteady mind from running after all those objects which it craves for and concentrate it on God."

3. How to control the mind?

अर्जुन उवाच

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद् दृढम्।

तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम्।।६.३४।।

Arjun says, "O Lord Krishna, this mind is very unsteady, turbulent, strong and obstinate. I consider it as difficult to control as the wind."

श्रीभगवानुवाच

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम्।

अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते।।६.३५।।

The Lord says, "There is no doubt that the mind is restless and very difficult to control. But it can be controlled by constant practice of yoga and by developing a feeling of detachment towards worldly objects."

अर्जुन उवाच

अयतिः श्रद्धयोपेतो योगाच्चलितमानसः।

अप्राप्य योगसंसिद्धिं कां गतिं कृष्ण गच्छति॥६.३७॥

Arjun says, "O Krishna, if a faithful devotee of yoga, because of his feeble mind, fails to attain perfection in yoga, what end does he meet?"

4. Benefits of yoga

श्रीभगवानुवाच

प्राप्य पुण्यकृतां लोकानुषित्वाशाश्वतीः समाः।

शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते॥६.४१॥

The Lord says, "A person who strays away from the path of yoga, attains the world of the righteous and having lived there for long, takes birth in the home of the pious and the rich."

तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदेहिकम्।

यतते च ततो भूयः संसिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन॥६.४३॥

"O Arjun! There he naturally regains the wisdom– acquired in his previous birth and as a consequence of that, he strives more than that he had done in his previous life to attain perfection."

प्रयत्नाद् यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः।

अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम्॥६.४५॥

"However, a yogi who strives diligently, he gets purified of all sins. Gradually, he gets perfected through many births and reaches the supreme goal."

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः।

कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद् योगी भवार्जुन॥६.४६॥

"A yogi is supposed to be superior to the ascetics and even superior to a man of wisdom or man of action. Therefore, O Arjun, you become a yogi."

Questions

1. How is a person his own friend?
2. When does a person become his own enemy?
3. State the meditation exercise for self-purification.

4. Who can become accomplished in yoga?
5. Why is the mind of a yogi compared to a lamp?
6. Why is it difficult to control the mind?
7. How can the mind be controlled?
8. Rank an ascetic, a yogi, a wise man and a man of action in order of their superiority.
9. What happens to our good actions performed in this life?
10. What is the benefit of performing good actions?

Chapter VII

Nature of Universe

In this chapter, Lord Krishna mentions the following points :

1. This world has been created as a result of the interaction of two entities– animate and inanimate.

a. There are eight inanimate factors consisting of five gross elements, viz. ether, air, fire, water and earth and three subtle factors namely, mind, intellect and ego.

b. One animate factor i.e. God activates the eight inanimate elements. Also, He is the cause of all creation.

2. Men are deluded by the operation of the three modes of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. Therefore, they remain unaware of God. However, God is always with them who are devoted to Him.

3. There are not many people who are devoted to God. Four categories of persons approach God :

a. Sufferers– to get rid of their sufferings.

b. Seekers of wealth.

c. Seekers of knowledge.

d. Men of wisdom.

4. The wise are sincerely devoted to God and He is very close to them. They never suffer.

1. Nature of Universe

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद् यतति सिद्धये।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वत:।।७.३।।

The Lord says, "Among thousands of men, scarcely one tries to reach Me. Even out of these seekers who succeeds! Scarcely one out of them knows Me in reality."

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायु: खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च।
अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा।।७.४।।

"Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and ego- these are eight divisions of My lower nature."

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम्।
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत्।।७.५।।

"O Arjun! Different from it is My higher nature-the life-element by which this world is upheld."

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय।
अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगत: प्रभव: प्रलयस्तथा।।७.६।।

"Know that all entities are born from the union of these two kinds of natures and I am the original cause of this universe."

त्रिभिर्गुणमयैर्भावैरेभि: सर्वमिदं जगत्।
मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्य: परमव्ययम्।।७.१३।।

"The whole world is deluded by the three gunas viz. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. The world does not know that I am above these three gunas and I am imperishable."

2. Seekers of God

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जना: सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ।।७.१६।।

"O Arjuna, four types of virtuous persons seek their refuge in Me- the sufferers, the seekers of wealth, the seekers of knowledge and men of wisdom."

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रिय:।।७.१७।।

"Out of these four, the wise possessing exclusive devotion stands

supreme because they ever remain united with Me. So, I am extremely dear to the wise, and the wise are extremely dear to Me."

Questions

1. Who are the seekers of God?
2. Who is supreme among them?
3. Which is said to be the higher nature of God?
4. What is the source from which objects of the world have evolved?

Chapter VIII

Life after Death

In this chapter, Lord Krishna states that the soul migrates from one life to another. At the last moment of his life, man is reminded of the most significant influences and events of his life. Whatever are his thoughts and aspirations at the last moment, he is endowed with them in his next life. Krishna advises man, how he should spend the last moments of his life.

यं यं वापि स्मरन् भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम्।
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावित:।।८.६।।

"O Arjun, whatever the embodied self thinks at the time of leaving the body, in his next birth, he attains that very thought accordingly because even during his life time, he had been absorbed in that very thought."

प्रयाणकाले मनसाऽचलेन भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव।
भ्रूवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक् स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम्।।८.१०।।

"One who meditates with yogic powers on Supreme Lord while firmly holding his concentration in the space between his eye-brows, keeping his mind steady and full of devotion, he reaches the Supreme Lord."

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च।
मूर्ध्न्याधायात्मन: प्राणमास्थितो योगधारणाम्।।८.१२।।

"He, who having closed all the gates of his sense organs, confines his mind in the heart, fixes his life breath in the head, engages in the practice of concentration."

ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन् मामनुस्मरन्।

यः प्रयाति त्यजन् देहं स याति परमां गतिम्॥८.१३॥

"Repeating the single syllabled word "OM", and remembering Me, leaves this body at the time of death, he attains the Supreme goal."

Questions

1. Do you believe in life after death or migration of the Soul from present life to a future life? Give reasons for your answer.
2. What is the importance of thoughts of a person at the time of death?
3. What should a man be thinking of at the time of his death?
4. What does modern science say about "life after death?"

Chapter IX

Creation and Dissolution of Universe

This chapter deals with the eternal process of creation and dissolution of this universe. At the end of the age, everything gets dissolved in the ultimate reality. Then the universe gets created again. All beings get reincarnated in the same manner as they had lived their lives in the world previously. However, those who are devoted to the Lord, attain the Lord. They are not born again.

1. Creation and dissolution of Universe

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम्।

कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम्॥९.७॥

"Arjun! At the end of the final dissolution, all beings merge into My nature. Then in the beginning of the new age, I bring them again into their being."

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान् पितृन् यान्ति पितृव्रताः।

भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम्॥९.२५॥

"Those who worship the gods, reach the gods; those who worship their ancestors, reach their ancestors, those who adore the spirits, reach the spirits and those who worship Me reach Me."

Questions

1. What does Lord Krishna say about the creation of this universe?
2. What does modern science say about the creation of this universe?

Chapter X

God as the Creator

In this chapter, Lord Krishna states about His own greatness. He says, "I am the creator of this universe and I sustain it as well. I am seated in the hearts of all. Therefore, all wise persons seek My refuge. In this universe, wherever you notice brilliance, power or glory, you can presume that it is a manifestation of a spark of My splendour."

1. God as the creator

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्त: सर्वं प्रवर्तते।

इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विता:॥१०.८॥

Lord Krishna says, "I am the first cause of all creation. In this world, everything moves because of Me. Accepting this fact, the wise- full of faith and devotion worship Me at all times."

मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्त: परस्परम्।

कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च॥१०.९॥

"The minds of my devotees are fixed on Me; their lives are totally surrendered to Me; they enlighten one another about My greatness; they always converse about Me; they remain ever contented and absorbed in Me."

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थित:।

अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामन्त एव च॥१०.२०॥

"O Arjun, I am the Self (soul) seated in the hearts of all creatures. I am the beginning, the middle and also the very end of all beings."

यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा।

तत् तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोंऽशसम्भवम्।।१०.४१।।

"Whatsoever being or object endowed with glory, brilliance and vigour there is, know that to be a manifestation of a spark of My splendour."

Questions

1. Who is said to be the creator of this universe?
2. Do you believe that God is seated in the hearts of all creatures? If so, why do people commit sin?

Chapter XI

Cosmic form of God

In this chapter, Arjun requests Lord Krishna to show him His Cosmic Self. Accordingly, the Lord obliges Arjun and manifests to Arjun thousands of his Divine forms.

अर्जुन उवाच

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो।

योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम्।।११.४।।

श्रीभगवानुवाच

पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः।।११.५

Arjun says, "O Lord of the yogis! if you consider that I am capable and deserving to see your divine form, then show me your Eternal Self."

The Lord said, "O Arjun! Behold hundreds and thousands of my divine forms."

Chapter XII

Worship of God

Arjun says to the Lord, "Tell me who is a better devotee of yours out of the two- one who adores your manifested form or one who adores your unmanifested form." The Lord answers the question to the satisfaction of Arjun. The Lord told Arjun, "Both are equally dear to Me. The path of worship of manifested form is easy and convenient while the path of worship of unmanifested form is difficult to follow. However, it is devotion which is most important in both the paths."

Worship of God

अर्जुन उवाच

एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते।
ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः॥१२.१॥

Arjun says, "There are some such devotees of yours who worship you in this divine form. Then there are also others who worship you in your eternal and unmanifested form. Out of these two kinds of devotees, who is superior?"

श्रीभगवानुवाच

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते।
श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः॥१२.२॥

The Lord said, "I consider those devotees to be the best who endowed with supreme faith and ever steadfast, worship Me with their mind concentrated on Me."

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम्॥१२.३॥
संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः॥१२.४॥

"However, those devotees controlling all their senses, even-minded towards all, engaged in the welfare of all other beings, constantly adore the imperishable, undefinable, un-manifest, omnipresent, unthinkable, unchangeable, unmovable and etneral, they also reach Me."

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम्।

अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते।।१२.५।।

"However, greater is the distraction for those whose minds are set on the unmanifested because identification of the Self with the unmanifested is attained with great difficulty."

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च।

निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी।।१२.१३।।

संतुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः।

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः।।१२.१४।।

"My that devotee who hates none, who is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from attachment and egoism, who remains balanced in pleasure and pain, who is forgiving, who is ever-contented, who is steady in meditation, who is self controlled, who is possessed of firm convictions and who has dedicated his mind and intellect to Me, he is very dear to me."

Questions

1 What are the two forms of the Lord worshipped by devotees?
2. Which one is the easier and why?
3. What is common in both the forms of worship?
4. What are the characteristic features of a good devotee?

Chapter XIII

Field and the knower of the field

This chapter deals with two fundamental eternal entities- Purush and Prakriti or the animate and the inanimate. Man is an embodiment of both. He has a body made up of the elements of Prakriti and he has a soul- a manifestation of Purush. To understand all this is true knowledge. Man must understand the two entities, their nature, their characteristic features, and lead his life keeping all this in view. He should not forget Purush or God. He should follow the commandments of God and seek salvation.

The field and the knower

प्रकृति पुरुषं चैव क्षेत्रं क्षेत्रज्ञमेव च।

एतद्वेदितुमिच्छामि ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं च केशव॥ 13.1.a॥

Arjun says, "O my Lord, I wish to know about the nature and the soul or about the Kshetra (field) and the Kshetragya (knower of the field). I also want to know what is Gyan (knowledge), which should be known."

श्रीभगवानुवाच

इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते।

एतद् यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः॥१३.१॥

The Lord says, "O son of Kunti, Arjun! Those who know the ultimate reality call this body as the field or Kshetra, and the one who knows this body to be so, is called the knower of the field or Kshetragya."

कार्यकारणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते।

पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते॥१३.२०॥

"Mother or Nature is said to be the source of cause and effect of all modifications in the universe. Soul is said to be the experiencer of all pleasures and pains."

समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम्।

विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति स पश्यति॥१३.२७॥

"One who sees the supreme Lord as the only imperishable substance abiding uniformly in all perishable objects, he alone sees the reality."

Questions

1. According to the Gita, what are the two eternal and ultimate entities in the universe?
2. What is the meaning of Kshetra?
3. Who is Kshetragya?
4. What is true knowledge?
5. What is the ultimate reality of this universe, according to Science?

Chapter XIV

Three gunas and their effects

This chapter deals with mental attitudes or inclinations of a person towards the world. Lord Krishna says that there can be three possible inclinations which man can have towards this world. They are as under :–

a. Inclination of moderation and balance born out of purity, good actions and wisdom. Such an inclination leads to happiness. This inclination is known as Satoguna.

b. Inclination of passion born out of craving, over-ambition, sensuousness, greed or selfishness. This leads to over-activity, craving, restlessness and sorrow. This is known as Rajoguna.

c. Inclination of negligence and indolence born out of inertia, delusion and undesirable pursuits. This leads to ignorance and negativity. This is known as Tamoguna.

All persons are endowed with all the three inclinations of Satoguna, Rajoguna and Tamoguna. But their proportion in different persons is different. Normally, any one such inclination dominates in a person, suppressing the other two. The predominant inclination determines the character and general attitude of the person.

However, the proportion of the three inclinations continues to change from time to time in accordance with a person's intake (food, drink, etc.), physical environment, social environment, life-style, etc. All the three are necessary in life. But predominance of Sattva guna followed by Rajoguna and Tamoguna is a more desirable combination.

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसम्भवाः।
निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम्॥१४.५॥

The Lord says, "O Arjun! The three modes or gunas namely goodness (Sattva), passion (Rajas) and dullness (Tamas) are born of nature (Prakriti). They bind down the imperishable soul to the body."

तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात् प्रकाशकमनामयम्।
सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघ॥१४.६॥

"O sinless Arjun! Sattva guna, because of its purity, is illuminating and free of infirmity. But it binds the soul to the body on account of its attachment to happiness and wisdom."

रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम्।
तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम्॥१४.७॥

"O son of Kunti! Rajas is of the nature of passion. It is born of craving and attachment. It binds the soul to the body on account of its attachment to actions."

तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम्।
प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्तन्निबध्नाति भारत॥१४.८॥

"O Arjun, Tamas is born of ignorance. It deludes all embodied beings. It binds the soul to the body through heedlessness, indolence, and sleep."

सत्त्वं सुखे संजयति रजः कर्मणि भारत।
ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे संजयत्युत॥१४.९॥

"O Bharata, Sattva dominates by binding one to happiness; Rajas dominates by binding one to actions; but Tamas dominates by clouding wisdom and binding one to heedlessness."

रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्वं भवति भारत।
रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव तमः सत्त्वं रजस्तथा॥१४.१०॥

"O Arjun! Sattva Guna prevails suppressing Rajas and Tamas; Rajas Guna prevails suppressing Sattva and Tamas; Tamas prevails suppressing Sattva and Rajas."

सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन् प्रकाश उपजायते।
ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याद् विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत॥१४.११॥

"When the light and wisdom shine forth from the body, senses and mind, then it should be presumed that Sattva Guna is predominant."

लोभः प्रवृत्तिरारम्भः कर्मणामशमः स्पृहा।
रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ॥१४.१२॥

"When greed, craving, activity, restlessness, and urge for enjoyment arise, O Arjun, then it should be presumed that Rajas Guna is predominant."

अप्रकाशोऽप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च।
तमस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन॥१४.१३॥

"O Arjun! When ignorance, inactivity, negligence and delusion arise, then it should be presumed that Tamas Guna is predominant."

कर्मणः सुकृतस्याहुः सात्त्विकं निर्मलं फलम्।
रजसस्तु फलंदुःखमज्ञानं तमसः फलम्॥१४.१६॥

"The outcome of virtuous actions is said to be the Sattva and flawless; the outcome of Rajas is pain; the outcome of Tamas is ignorance."

सत्त्वात् संजायते ज्ञानं रजसो लोभ एव च।
प्रमादमोहौ तमसो भवतोऽज्ञानमेव च॥१४.१७॥

"Wisdom arises from Sattva; greed arises from Rajas. Similarly, heedlessness, delusion and ignorance arise from Tamas."

Questions

1. Nature is said to manifest itself in the form of three gunas which penetrate into every entity of this universe– animate and inanimate. What are these three Gunas?
2. Attraction in the Gunas binds all entities to the world. This attraction is too strong for man to resist. What is the effect of the three Gunas on man?
3. At a particular time, one Guna predominates suppressing the other two. How can one know which Guna is predominant at a particular time?
4. Are the Gunas a curse for man? Support your answer with arguments.
5. Can a person change the combination of Gunas in himself? If so, how?
6. How can a person be free from the evil effects of the Gunas?
7. What is meant by "Gunateet" (गुणातीत)?

Chapter XV

How to Attain God?

In this chapter, Lord Krishna explains the nature of this world and how man gets entangled in worldly snares. The Lord advises moderation and maintenance of balance in various aspects of one's life. The nature of God and His relationship with the world and man have also been explained.

निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः।

द्वन्द्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञैर्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत्॥१५.५॥

"One who is free from pride and delusion who has gained victory over the evil of attachment, who constantly dwells in the Self, whose desires have completely subsided, who is free from the pairs of opposites known as pleasures and pains, such an undeluded person reaches the eternal goal."

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च।

क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते॥१५.१६॥

"There are two Purushas in this world- Perishable and the Imperishable. All beings are perishable and only the unchanging one is the imperishable."

Chapter XVI

Nature of Man

This chapter deals with the divine traits and demonic traits in man. The roots of both the traits are present in every person in unmanifested form. Good habits and right life-style nurtures divine traits while bad habits and wrong life-style nurtures demonic traits. It is for man himself to be watchful and to develop the following divine traits :–

1. Control on senses.	6. Kindness.
2. Performance of one's obligations and duties.	7. Charity.

3. Control on anger.	8. Truthfulness.
4. Tranquillity of mind.	9. Hard work.
5. Forgiveness.	10. Moderation.

Man should carefully avoid the following demonic traits :-

1. Pride	5. Ignorance
2. Anger	6. Cruelty
3. Greed	7. Injustice
4. Passion	

1. Divine Traits

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः।
दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम्॥१६.१॥
अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम्।
दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम्॥१६.२॥
तेजः क्षमाः धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता।
भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत॥१६.३॥

The Lord says, O Arjun! The following are the qualities of a person born with divine traits :-

1. Fearlessness	14. Peace
2. Purity of mind	15. Absence of crookedness
3. Stead fast in knowledge and yoga	16. Compassion for beings
4. Alms-giving	17. Non-covetousness
5. Control on senses or self-restraint	18. Gentleness
6. Performance of one's ordained duties	19. Modesty or shame in committing sin
7. Study of scriptures	20. Absence of fickleness of mind
8. Austerity	21. Vigour
9. Straight-forwardness	22. Forgiveness
10. Harmlessness or non-	23. Fortitude

violence	
11. Truthfulness	24. Purity
12. Absence of anger	25. Absence of hatred
13. Renunciation	26. Absence of vanity

2. Demonic Traits

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च।

अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सम्पदमासुरीम्॥१६.४॥

"O Arjun! Vanity, arrogance, self-conceit, anger, harshness and ignorance are the traits of a person born with demonic nature."

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः।

कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत् त्रयं त्यजेत्॥१६.२१॥

"Passion, anger and greed– these three are the triple gates to hell which lead to the ruin of the Self. Therefore, one should abandon these three."

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः।

न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम्॥१६.२३॥

"He who abandons the prescriptions of the scriptures and acts according to his own sweet will, attains neither perfection, nor happiness nor the supreme goal."

Questions

1. What are the two types of traits in man mentioned in the Gita?
2. Mention any five divine traits.
3. Is man sinful by birth? If not, why and how does man become demonic?
4. Which are the triple gates to hell stated in the Gita?
5. How can one safeguard oneself from these gates to hell?

Chapter XVII

Nature of intention is important in action

In this chapter, it is emphasised by the Lord that the outward form of an action can be deceptive. It is the inclination, the disposition, the motive and the faith with which that action is undertaken which is crucial. The three inclinations of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas determine the essence of the action and the result and the outcome. The result of actions will vary accordingly. This is very well explained with reference to (a) faith, (b) food, (c) charity and (d) austerity.

Faith

Those who worship with Sattvik inclination, worship gods and goddesses

Those who worship with Rajasik inclination, worship demons.

Those who worship with Tamasik inclination, worship ghosts and spirits.

Food

Persons with Sattvik inclination take nutritious, balanced, agreeable, fresh and sweet foods. Such foods result in health, energy, longevity, purity and joy.

Persons with Rajasik inclination take bitter, sour, hot, pungent, dry and fried foods which cause indigestion, pain, illness and grief.

Persons with Tamasik inclination take stale, stinking, polluted and impure foods which cause disease, mental weakness and early death.

Austerity or Tapas and Charity

Tapas can be of three kinds, depending upon the nature of mental inclination.

a. Tapas of the body- worship, cleanliness, control on senses, service of others.
b. Tapas of speech- Truthfulness, agreeable and beneficial utterances, repetition of the name of the Lord.
c. Tapas of mind- Purity, serenity, control on passion, meditation.

Those who do so with Sattvik inclination, do it as an ordained

duty and with devotion. They give charity to a deserving person at the appropriate time and without expecting anything in return.

Those who do so with Rajasik inclination, do it for name, fame and with pride and show and with expectations to get something in return.

Those who do so with Tamasik inclination, do it without faith, in an insulting manner, to an undeserving person and at a wrong time.

Therefore, intention with which an action is performed is very important and makes all the difference. So, do good and with good intention.

1. Three kinds of faith

अर्जुन उवाच

ये शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य यजन्ते श्रद्धयाऽन्विताः।
तेषां निष्ठा तु का कृष्ण सत्त्वमाहो रजस्तमः॥१७.१॥

Arjun says, "O Lord! What is the nature of the faith of those persons– Sattvik, Rajasik, or Tamasik, who reject the scriptural prescriptions and perform worship according to their own personal faith?"

श्रीभगवानुवाच

त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनां सा स्वभावजा।
सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेतितां शृणु॥१७.२॥

The Lord says, "Listen to me. Such personal faith of an individual, disregarding the scriptural prescriptions, is inherent in his nature and can be of any of the three kinds– Sattvik, Rajasik, or Tamasik."

सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत।
श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः॥१७.३॥

"O Arjun! The faith of a person is in accordance with his natural disposition or inclination. Faith constitutes the very essence of a being. Whatever is the nature of his faith, surely, he is really that."

2. Three kinds of food

आहारस्त्वपि सर्वस्य त्रिविधो भवति प्रियः।
यज्ञस्तपस्तथा दानं तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु॥१७.७॥

"O my dear, even the food relished by different persons in accordance with their nature is different. So also the sacrifice, penance and alms-giving are different. Hear from me the difference in their kinds."

आयुः सत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः।

रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिरा हृद्या आहाराः सात्त्विकप्रियाः॥१७.८॥

"Foods which promote longevity, purity, strength, health, joy and cheerfullness are sweet, soft, nourishing and agreeable. Such foods are dear to the Sattvik persons."

कट्वम्ललवणात्युष्णतीक्ष्णरूक्षविदाहिनः।

आहारा राजसस्येष्टा दुःखशोकामयप्रदाः॥१७.९॥

"Foods which are bitter, sour, saltish, very hot, dry, burning, and giving rise to pain, grief and illness, are dear to the Rajasik persons."

यातयामं गतरसं पूति पर्युषितं च यत्।

उच्छिष्टमपि चामेध्यं भोजनं तामसप्रियम्॥१७.१०॥

"Foods which are half cooked, tasteless, stinking, stale and polluted are dear to the Tamasik persons."

3. Three kinds of sacrifice

अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्यज्ञो विधिदृष्टो य इज्यते।

यष्टव्यमेवेति मनः समाधाय स सात्त्विकः॥१७.११॥

"That sacrifice which is performed because it is prescribed by scriptural ordinances, which is offered without expecting anything in return and which is offered with a firm belief that it is one's duty to do so, is Sattvik scarifice."

अभिसंधाय तु फलं दम्भार्थमपि चैव यत्।

इज्यते भरतश्रेष्ठ तं यज्ञं विद्धि राजसम्॥१७.१२॥

"O Arjun, sacrifice which is offered in expectation of some reward or for selfish motive or for name and fame, know it to be Rajasik."

विधिहीनमसृष्टान्नं मन्त्रहीनमदक्षिणम्।

श्रद्धाविरहितं यज्ञं तामसं परिचक्षते॥१७.१३॥

"That sacrifice which is without sanction of the scriptures, in which no food is distributed, in which no mantras are chanted, in

which no fees are paid to the priests and which is devoid of faith is known as Tamasik sacrifice."

4. Three kinds of penance

देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमार्जवम्।
ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते।।१७.१४।।

"Penance is of three kinds- of body, of speech and of mind. Worship of the gods, of the Brahmins, of teachers and liberated souls, cleaning of the body, uprightness, celibacy and non-violence are penance of the body."

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत्।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते।।१७.१५।।

"Unoffensive, truthful, agreeable and beneficial speech, regular study of the scriptures, chanting of the divine name of God- all these are said to be the penance of the speech."

मन:प्रसाद: सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रह:।
भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत् तपो मानसमुच्यते।।१७.१६।।

"Cheerfulness of mind, serenity, meditation on God, self-control and purity of mind-all this is said to be penance of the mind."

श्रद्धया परया तप्तं तपस्तत् त्रिविधं नरै:।
अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्युक्तै: सात्त्विकं परिचक्षते।।१७.१७।।

"If the three-fold penance (of body, speech and mind) is practised with supreme faith and concentrated mind and without the expectation of any reward- all these are called Sattvik penance."

सत्कारमानपूजार्थं तपो दम्भेन चैव यत्।
क्रियते तदिह प्रोक्तं राजसं चलमध्रुवम्।।१७.१८।।

"Penance which is practised with the object of winning respect, honour, worship or for show and is unstable and transitory in effect is said to be Rajasik penance."

मूढग्राहेणात्मनो यत् पीडया क्रियते तप:।
परस्योत्सादनार्थं वा तत् तामसमुदाहृतम्।।१७.१९।।

"Penance practised under deluded understanding with self-torture or with the object of causing injury to others is called Tamasik penance."

5. Three kinds of charity

दातव्यमिति यद् दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे।
देशे काले च पात्रे च तद् दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम्।।१७.२०।।

"Alms or charity given to one from whom no return is expected, given with a feeling that it is one's duty to give such charity, given at the proper place and time and given to a deserving person– is said to be Sattvik charity."

यत्तु प्रत्युपकारार्थं फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुनः।
दीयते च परिक्लिष्टं तद् दानं राजसं स्मृतम्।।१७.२१।।

"Charity which is offered with a view to get some service in return or expecting some reward or return or given grudgingly, is said to be Rajasik charity."

अदेशकाले यद् दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते।
असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत् तामसमुदाहृतम्।।१७.२२।।

"Charity given at an improper place, at an inopportune time, to an undeserving person and given in a dis-respectful or an insulting manner, is said to be Tamasik charity."

अश्रद्धया हुतं दत्तं तपस्तप्तं कृतं च यत्।
असदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत् प्रेत्य नो इह।।१७.२८।।

"O Arjun, whatever sacrifice is performed, charity is given or penance is practised as well as other acts performed with out faith are called "Asat" or without any effect. They are of no use– either in this life or in life hereafter."

Questions

1. What determines the quality of our actions?
2. What are the three kinds of foods?
3. Which kind of food is the best and why?
4. What kind of food should be avoided and why?
5. What makes a sacrifice really worthwhile?
6. How many kinds of penance are there? Name them.
7. Which penance is of no avail?
8. What considerations should be kept in mind while giving charity?

Chapter XVIII

The Noble Path

In this last chapter, the main points have been again emphasised. The concepts of Sanyas and Karma yoga are further explained. Krishna says that there is no difference between the two. Sanyas means giving up attachment to worldly desires and aspirations but still performing one's ordained duties sincerely. Karma yoga means performing ones ordained duties but without a feeling of egoism and without craving for some premeditated results. Due performance of ordained duties and non-attachment are common to both. The difference is only of one's perception and emphasis.

Krishna also says that the nature of actions, nature of persons and nature of happiness derived from one's actions is again dependent on the attitude or inclination of the person.

Actions

Actions performed without egoism, passion or expecting premeditated results are Sattvik actions. Actions performed with egoism, with craving for results and with great effort are Rajasik actions. Actions performed without considering their consequences and their propriety are Tamasik actions.

Doer or person

A person who performs actions without egoism, without attachment, with firmness and faith but without expecting premeditated results is a Sattvik person or doer. Person who is passionate, greedy, desirous of fruits of actions and is affected by success or failure is a Rajasik person or doer.

A person who is malicious, deceitful, vulgar, lazy and violent is a Tamasik person or doer.

Joy or happiness

Joy which is lasting and outcome of noble actions or deep meditation and puts an end to all sufferings is Sattvik joy or happiness.

Joy which is the outcome of sensory pleasures and is short lived is Rajasik joy or happiness. Joy which is the outcome of delusion, derived from sleep or inaction is Tamasik joy or happiness.

The Lord also describes the ordained duties of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. He also states the marks of an ideal person. At the end, the Lord asks Arjun to do whatever appeals to him the most.

1. Renunciation

अर्जुन उवाच

संन्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम्।।१८.१।।

Arjun says, "O my Lord, I wish to understand the true nature of Renunciation."

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत्।

यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम्।।१८.५।।

Shri Krishna said, "Sacrifice, charity and penance should not be given up. They must be performed. Sacrifice, charity and penance are greatly purifying, even for the learned."

एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च।

कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम्।।१८.६।।

"My definite and supreme opinion is that these three duties and other actions approved by the scriptures must be performed but, of course, without attachment and without expecting some definite results."

नियतस्य तु संन्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते।

मोहात् तस्य परित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तितः।।१८.७।।

"Renunciation of such duties, as prescribed by the scriptures is not proper for any one. To give up such actions because of ignorance is said to be Tamasik form of Renunciation."

2. Three kinds of actions

नियतं सङ्गरहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम्।

अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत्तत् सात्त्विकमुच्यते।।१८.२३।।

"Actions which are obligatory, which are performed without attachment, without love or hate, without expecting a definite outcome, are said to be Sattvik actions."

यत्तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहंकारेण वा पुनः।

क्रियते बहुलायासं तद् राजसमुदाहृतम्।।१८.२४।।

"Actions which are performed with craving or with egoism or with great passion are called Rajasik actions."

अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसामनवेक्ष्य च पौरुषम्।
मोहादारभ्यते कर्म यत्तत् तामसमुच्यते।।१८.२५।।

"Actions which are performed under delusion, without consideration of their outcome, loss, injury or capacity are declared to be Tamasik actions."

3. Three kinds of doers

मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते।।१८.२६।।

"A doer who is free from attachment and egoism, who is full of firmness and vigour and who is unaffected by success or failure, is said to be Sattvik doer."

रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः।
हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः।।१८.२७।।

"A doer who is passionate, who expects fruits of his actions, who is greedy, is given to violence, is of impure conduct and is affected by joy or despair, is declared as Rajasik doer."

अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तब्धः शठोऽनैष्कृतिकोऽलसः।
विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते।।१८.२८।।

"A doer who is unsteady, vulgar, stubborn, deceitful, malicious, lazy, despondent, and slow is said to be, Tamasik doer."

4. Three kinds of happiness

सुखं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ।
अभ्यासाद् रमते यत्र दुःखान्तं च निगच्छति।।१८.३६।।
यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम्।
तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम्।।१८.३७।।

"Now hear from me the three kinds of happiness. That happiness which is enjoyed through continued practice, which helps to reach the end of sorrow, which appears like poison in the beginning but tastes as nectar at the end, which is born of the clear understanding of the Self is called Sattavik happiness."

विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद् यत्तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम्।
परिणामे विषमिव तत् सुखं राजसं स्मृतम्॥१८.३८॥

"That happiness which arises from contact of the senses with worldly objects and which is like nectar in the beginning but proves like poison at the end is said to be Rajasik happiness."

यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः।
निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम्॥१८.३९॥

"That happiness which deludes the Self- both at the beginning and also at the end, is derived from sleep, indolence and negligence is said to be Tamasik happiness."

5. Duties of the four Varnas

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणां च परंतप।
कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर्गुणैः॥१८.४१॥[1]

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1. **Varna :** There is a hymn in the Rigveda called the Purush Sukta. It has a mantra as under:

ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीदाहू राजन्यः कृतः।
ऊरू तदस्य यद्वैश्यः पद्भ्यां शूद्रो अजायत॥ Rg. X. 90.12 (पुरुषसूक्त)

"The Brahmin was his mouth; the Kshatriya was made to serve his arms; the Vaishya served as his thighs; the Shudra emerged out of his feet."

Let us try to examine closely on what basis this classification of society had been arrived at.

The classification refers to a hierarchy starting from the top i.e. mouth and going down to arms thighs and feet. Who should get the pride of place in the society? What should be his qualifications? What should be his mental and moral equipment? What should be his character? What should be his behaviour and life-style?

1. The classification has been done with the help of a metaphor which indicates that the hierarchy of classes in a society should be based on quality and character of a person and not on any other basis like caste, colour, race, birth, region, religion, scholarship, wealth, status etc. See the qualifications of the four varnas and scrutinise minutely whether the hierarchy really represents hierarchy of quality and character–

a. Brahmin : Control of mind, control of senses, purity, performance of duties, forgiveness, uprightness, knowledge, faith in God.
b. Kshatriya : Heroism, firmness, vigour, generosity, leadership, resourcefulness bravery, fearlessness.
c. Vaishya : Producer of wealth through trade, commerce and agriculture etc.

d. Shudra : One who has no special quality but is obedient, carries out orders faithfully, is hardworking and disciplined. He helps all others in their work.

2. Obviously, these qualifications fit these categories corresponding to the following responsibilities

a. Brahmin : Looks to the welfare of the people, lays down rules, laws, code of conduct, judicial functions involving justice, engages himself in teaching and research.

b. Kshatriya : Leaders of men, governance, security and safety of people, law and order, control on institutions, control on anti-social elements, protection of the good, even-handed justice, rule of law.

c. Vaishya : production of wealth, trade, commerce, business, exchange of wealth of the society for the good of the society.

d. Shudra : Facilitating the performance of duties by the other three.

(3) Look at the mental tendencies and self-restraint which the four Varnas should have :

a. Shudras : These are persons whose mind is easily gripped by the pleasures of the senses. They are usually engaged in manual labour.

b. Vaishyas : They must exercise restraint over their senses, enjoyment of sensory pleasures and observe restraint in life. Moderation is a must in seeking pleasures of the senses. If it is not done, they will soon indulge in vicious activities like drinking, intoxication, crime and use of man-power for anti-social activities. They act as producers of wealth or custodians of wealth of the society. They must be much above Shudras in their mental outlook, moral behaviour and character.

(c) Kshatriyas : They should not only have control on senses, mind and restraint on seeking pleasures of the senses but also free from greed, acquisition and accumulation of wealth etc. Or else, as administrators, executives and leaders of men, they will resort to corruption, nepotism and supporters of anti-social elements. Very soon, governance will suffer, crime graph will go up, the whole society will be in the grip of corruption, inefficiency, insecurity, scams etc. They must be men of high moral character with conviction and courage, strong and fearless, sacrificing and altruistic.

(d) Brahmins : They are expected to be possessed of divine qualities. They should have full control on their senses and mind. They should be free from greed of wealth. They should be free from vanity, pride, egoism and selfishness. They are to serve as legislators and judicial officers. They are to lay down laws, rules, codes of conduct and behaviour. They are to set an example before the whole society. They are to be free from normal human weaknesses. They have to be sacrificing and altruistic. Only then they can be called Brahmins and fulfil their ordained obligations. One who is a slave of the senses, one who is filled with greed, worldly ambitions, vanity, egoism etc. cannot be called a Brahmin.

"O Arjun, the duties of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras have been prescribed in accordance with their gunas born of their respective nature."

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्तिरार्जवमेव च।

ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम्॥१८.४२॥

The characteristics of a Brahmin born of his nature are :-

a. Control of mind.	e. Forgiveness.
b. Control of senses.	f. Uprightness of body and mind.
c. Undergoing hardship in the performance of duty.	g. Knowledge of the Vedas and other scriptures.
d. External and internal purity.	h. Faith in God.

शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दाक्ष्यं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम्।

दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षात्रं कर्म स्वभावजम्॥१८.४३॥

The characteristics of a Kshatriya born of his nature are :-

a. Heroism.	e. Not fleeing from the battlefield.
b. Vigour.	f. Generosity.
c. Firmness.	g. Leadership.
d. Resourcefulness.	

कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम्।

परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम्॥१८.४४॥

The natural traits of a Vaishya are :-

a. Agriculture.

b. Rearing of cows.

This is the divine order for the four kinds of social responsibilities corresponding to the categories of suitable persons for those responsibilities. If this order is not established in a society and wrong persons are given responsibilities, authority and privileges, the society is sure to go to dogs. But such a classification is not possible from the time of birth but only after twenty or twenty five years of age when the character of a person is fairly well set. Birth-based caste is man-made classification of the society and not divine classification of the society.

c. Trade.

Providing necessary service to all the classes is the duty of a Shudra born of his own nature.

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुण: परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात्।
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन् नाप्नोति किल्बिषम्।।१८.४७।।

"One's own duty when well performed may be devoid of merit or glamour but it is better than the duty of another person. One does not incur sin by performing one's duty as prescribed by the scriptures (and which is in accordance with one's inherent nature)."

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत्।
सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृता:।।१८.४८।।
बुद्ध्या विशुद्धया युक्त: धृत्य आत्मानम् नियम्य च।
शब्दादीन् विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौव्युदस्य च।।१८.५१।।
विविक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाक्कायमानस:।
ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं वैराग्यं समुपाश्रित:।।१८.५२।।
अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम्।
विमुच्य निर्मम: शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते।।१८.५३।।

Only such a person is worthy to be called a Brahmin who :

a. Is of pure undestanding.
b. Restrains the self with firmness.
c. Renounces the objects of senses.
d. Is free from attraction and aversion.
e. Dwells at a sacred and solitary place.
f. Eats light food.
g. Has his body, mind and speech under his control.
h. Is ever engaged in meditation and concentration.
i. Takes refuge in dispassion.
j. Casts aside all egoism, violence, arrogance, desire, anger and greed.
k. Is calm in mind.

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया।
विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु।।१८.६३।।

Thus I have imparted to you this knowledge which is the most secret of all secret knowledge. Reflect upon it fully and then act as you like.

सर्वधर्मान परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज।

अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः॥ १८.६६॥

Abondoning all duties to Me, seek My refuge alone. Do not grieve, for I shall liberate you from all sins.

Questions

1. What is the difference between renunciation and detached action?
2. Which is more important in an action– its form or its intention?
3. What considerations should be kept in view while performing an action?
4. What type of actions should be avoided?
5. What is Sattvik action?
6. What is Tamasik happiness?
7. What was the basis of classification of persons into four categories?
8. Who is a real Brahmin?
9. What type of occupation should one follow?
10. What is the last advice of Lord Krishna to Arjun?

* * *

Part III

I Message of the Gita

Section-A Causes of Suffering

In day-to-day life, every person is faced with situations and problems where one has to take a decision and act upon. The Gita helps us to take wise decisions so as to avoid suffering and attain happiness.

Know your inherent nature and your ordained obligations in accordance with your social status.

In any situation, take an appropriate decision and act accordingly rather than to postpone the decision or not to take any decision or not to act at all.

Our actions are the cause of our happiness and sufferings. Correct and timely actions lead to happiness, whereas incorrect decisions and inaction lead to suffering.

Our actions and decisions are incorrect because of the following four reasons :

1) Ignorance, 2) Delusion, 3) Wrong or Perverted knowledge, 4) Egoistic attitude. Face such situations in the following manner :

1) Ignorance

When, it is not possible to arrive at a correct decision because of Ignorance, take the following steps in order of preference:-

a. Do what the authentic scriptures, law books etc. have prescribed under such a situation.

b. Do what some great man has done in a similar situation.

c. Follow the social tradition in consultation with an elderman of your society.

d. Do what your inner voice says.

2) Delusion

Another obstacle in taking a correct decision can be delusion in the form of emotional imbalance, deep-rooted cravings, selfish motives, narrow outlook, bias, prejudice, heavy unconscious, or

some factor which is likely to present a distorted view of the situation. In such a case, following steps should be taken :

a. Understand the true nature of the universe, body, mind, intellect and the ego.
b. Exercise control on sense organs.
c. Restrain the motor organs from hasty and incorrect actions.
d. Steady the mind through Pranayama.
e. Take guidance from some elderman of your society.
f. Do what your inner voice says.

3) Wrong or Perverted Knowledge

Yet another cause of confusion in taking a correct decision can be wrong or perverted knowledge, waywardness of intellect, pre-determined notions, faulty inferences, wrong reasoning, etc. In such a situation, the following steps should be taken :-

a. Consult some learned authority on the subject.
b. Observe moderation in seeking pleasures of the senses.
c. Ensure that the balance in various aspects of life- physical, psychological, social and spiritual is not disturbed.
d. Practise meditation.
e. See that your action is Nishkam Karma, i.e., no pre-determined favourable results are expected.

4) Egoistic Attitude

The fourth obstacle in arriving at a correct decision can be egoistic attitude, an inflated ego, over-ambition, distorted life-style or wrong Sanskars. Under these circumstances, take the following steps:

a. Understand that this universe is being sustained by God. It has a purpose, a direction and a goal which must prevail. One such goal is retributive justice to all living beings, in accordance with the nature of their actions and intentions. Another goal is sustenance of divinity and goodness against injustice and viciousness. If there is any distortion, it gets corrected through the agency of God Himself.
b. Have control over your senses, mind, intellect and ego, and

perform your ordained duties in a natural way without any egoistic attitude.

c. Practise yoga.

d. Perform selfless service to those who are doing their best but still need further help. This is real yajna in life.

e. Always remember God and His greatness. In any difficulty, seek His refuge.

Thus, you will be free from suffering and enjoy happiness.

Be sure, there is no other way.

Section-B Road to Happiness

Message of the Gita has been stated in Section A from the cognitive point of view. There is another message of the Gita from the behavioural point of view. It states as under:-

a) You should always remember God, His attributes and His commandments. He is your best refuge.

b) Observe moderation in enjoyment of pleasures of the senses by having control on your mind.

c) Keep balance in the development of all the four aspects of your life- physical, psychological, social and spiritual by paying due attention to each aspect.

d) Perform all your ordained duties faithfully to the best of your capacity and with a detached mind.

e) Develop all your potentialities to the optimum.

f) Practise Yoga and Yajna in your daily life.

II Commandments of Lord Krishna

1. You are born in a country, in a religion, in a region, in a culture and in a family. Accept your social status with humility and gratitude and make a resolve to do your best to make your life sublime.
2. This world is real, meaningful and significant for you. Try to understand it, its operational laws and their implications for you.
3. You have been endowed with a number of potential abilities.

Know them and develop them to their optimum to make your life productive and purposeful.

4. You are tied up with some obligatory and some voluntary relationships with your parents, your siblings, your life partner, your children, relatives, friends, neighbours and others. Let these relationships be honest and harmonious.
5. These relationships confer on you some rights and impose on you some duties. They are your ordained obligations. Know them, understand them and fulfil them to the best of your capacity.
6. As a human being, you have a number of natural urges which will manifest themselves at their opportune time. They need to be satisfied but with moderation and restraint, lest they harm you. So enjoy the pleasures of this world with moderation and detachment.
7. As a member of the society, you will come to have some worldly aspirations as name, fame, status, power, wealth, progeny etc. Do your best to achieve those aspirations. Do not run away from the battlefield of life. But maintain a balance in various aspects of your life– physical, psychological, social and spiritual, or else your life will become lop-sided and imbalanced.
8. Let your mind be under your control otherwise it will become your master and, lead you astray from the rightful path. Practise yoga so that you may enjoy your stay in this world and also have peace of mind.
9. Try to make this world a better place through your selfless service and sacrifice. Perform social service as your obligation towards the society.
10. Always have faith in God, in His retributive justice and in His commandments and abide by them.

"With or without the help of others, develop yourself in your true form (fully developed potential) and right functions (fulfilment of your ordained duties) and lead your life in a spirit of dedication and love."

III Important quotes for life from the Gita

1.	धर्मक्षेत्र कुरुक्षेत्रे	I.1	Fulfil your ordained duties in all aspects of your life.
2.	व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः एकः	II.41	There has to be one-pointed determination while performing an action.
3.	कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते	II.47	You have the right just to perform your duties.
4.	मा फलेषु कदाचन	II.47	You should not expect to get results according to your choice.
5.	समत्वं योग उच्यते	II.48	Yoga implies freedom from personal likes and dislikes and complete objectivity.
6.	योगः कर्मसुकौशलम्	II.50	Excellence in actions is Yoga.
7.	परित्राणाय साधूनाम्	IV.8	Let your life be spent in helping the saintly persons.
8.	किम् कर्म किम् अकर्म इति	IV.16	Know clearly what is good action and what is bad action.
9.	आत्मा एव हि आत्मनः बन्धुः	VI.5	You are your own best friend.
10.	आत्मा एव रिपुः आत्मनः	VI.5	You are your own worst enemy.
11.	युक्त आहार विहारस्य.... दुःखहा	VI.17	Just moderate and regulated enjoyment of food and pleasure of the senses put an end to the sufferings.
12.	मनः दुर्निग्रहम् चलम्	VI.35	Mind is very fickle and it is very difficult to control it.
13.	अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण चगृह्यते	VI.35	But it can be controlled by practice of Yoga and an attitude of renunciation.
14.	यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु	XVIII .63	Do what your inner voice prompts you to do.
15.	सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज	XVIII .66	Leaving aside all doubts and controversies, surrender yourself to God.

Part-IV

World of Man and Modern Science of Happy Living

I. Introduction

1. It is believed that the battle of Mahabharat was fought about 5000 years ago. The Lord delivered his divine message to the despondent Arjun long long ago. The message worked as a miracle. It transformed a depressed and wayward soldier into a determined and invincible warrior.

2. The condition of youth of today could be slightly better than that of Arjun but not very uplifting. He often feels alienated and rootless. He has an illusive satisfaction from sensual pleasures but soon he feels a vacuum in his life. He has little faith in God or His retributive justice. He has little respect for the law and the institutions established under law. He has a low opinion about man in general. In utter frustration, he runs after drugs; takes to the path of unlimited sensual pleasures; drowns himself in drinks; has no hesitation to indulge in crime and sometimes even to run away from life.

3. The Indian youth is a bit better. He is an aspiring youth. But rampant corruption, glaring inefficiency and rising crime graph often dampen his enthusiasm. His religion exhorts him to be wary of the world and avoid entanglement in worldly affairs. He is often falsely tempted by the divine life of the other world. His religion does not inspire him much. Sometimes, he feels like running away from the battle-field of life, like his ancestor– Arjun of Mahabharata.

4. The modern youth may be awaiting the arrival of the Lord to pull him up from the depths of depression. But what will be the message of the Lord for the Arjun of today? The same as on the battlefield of Kurukshetra or somewhat different!

5. Much water has run down the Ganges since then. The dazzling scene of today is not the same as during the dreary days of the ancient Mahabharat. The times have changed. The society and its aspirations have changed. The enveloping environment has seen a sea-change. Science and technology are so different. Relationships are so formal and deceptive. Materialism has taken man in its grip. The inner springs of behaviour have become laxed. The disciplinary traditions of

the family are left far behind. Society has lost control over its members. The State is hesitant to govern and discipline its citizens. Man has got the liberty to become a law unto himself. Under such diametrically changed circumstances, naturally the message of the Lord may be somewhat different.

6. The religious philosophy of the Gita warns that the world which is surcharged with the three gunas binds man to the world. The Gita wants an individual to be Gunateet (गुणातीत)– unaffected by the influences of the three Gunas– Sattva, Rajas and Tamas (Gita XIV. 22-23). Krishna says that this wordly peepal tree creates pride, attachment and sensuality in man which are bad. He wants man to cut this peepal tree with the axe of renunciation. (Gita XV.3). The youth of today may not relish such statements from the Lord. He finds the world interesting, attractive, beautiful and enjoyable. He wants to entangle himself in the affairs of the world more and more and for good reasons.
7. The moral philosophy presented by Lord Krishna in the Gita is perhaps too strict. The Lord wants man to be free from attachment and free from desires (Gita V.22) (Gita VI.3). Lord wants man to be a Yogi (Gita VII.46). This may be too much to expect from the youth of today.
8. The Lord says, "You are entitled to perform your duties and not expect any premeditated results from your actions." (Gita II.47) The Lord does not want man to have any attachment or feeling of a doer or an egoistic attitude (Gita VI.3). The youth of today may not accept these propositions. He is decidedly after name, fame and expects credit for his actions.
9. The social philosophy presented by Lord Krishna is still more against the temperament of the modern youth. Lord Krishna asks Arjun to surrender himself to Him (XVIII.65, 66). This smacks of dictatorship which the democratic youth abhors the most. He may accept His patronage and leadership but total surrender is certainly out of question for the youth of today.

10. There appears to be an over-emphasis on other-worldliness, salvation and Nirvan through renunciation. There is too much importance given to restraint, control and prohibitions, keeping out even legitimate enjoyment of pleasures of the senses and other worldly aspirations. This would not be a welcome advice for the modern youth. What he aspires for is a happy life.
11. In view of the present situation of the world and the social climate, the Lord Himself may desist from presenting such idealistic propositions and may like to tone down His message in several ways. The ingredients may be the same. But the recipe has surely to be different. It has to have modern flavour. Certainly, the creation of His universe shall be presented keeping in view the discoveries of modern sciences. The concept of God may also be less mystifying and less obscure. The concept of the world may also not be so pessimistic. Even man may appear to be less demonic. It appears that the Lord will surely recast his message in view of the present circumstances and the psychology of the youth of today.
12. We need not wait for the Lord to come and give us a sermon. He is always with us in the form of Divine Mind sitting right inside us. Whenever we wish, we can approach Him, consult Him, converse with Him and seek His advice. He is always with us. He is always for us. He will always give us correct advice and lead us on the path of Dharma. We have just to approach Him.
13. However, God and His attributes are still the same. The same laws of nature are still operative. The inner Self of man is still characterised by the same natural urges. Adam is still Adam and Eve is still Eve. The world of God is still the same and so also the Divine Laws of God. It is the world of man which has changed. Therefore, State Laws and Laws of social organisations, should be updated accordingly.
14. In the succeeding pages are presented the various opinions about these concepts of God, Universe, Man and Society against the background of the latest modern knowledge. Man may accept any one of such opinions. However, it will be

greatly appreciated if the young man of today scans all such opinions himself, and on the basis of his own life experiences, forms his own opinion about these concepts of God, Universe, Man and Society. He should consider his opinion as the most trustworthy and hold his convictions to his heart. That will strengthen his self-confidence, provide stability to his life and prepare him adequately to face the battle of life.

15. Man should heed the eternal silent sermons of the Lord against the back ground of his own convictions and then reinterpret them with reference to his own life situations. If he meditates on God and His attributes, his astral ears will surely catch His silent sermons. His whispers shall successfully guide man in his life. That is the way to Happy Living.

* * *

II. GOD

A. God and Man

Belief in God comes to man as naturally and as instinctively as breathing. No effort is made to acquire this belief in God. It is absorbed from the social environment and it soon becomes a part of his life. Almost all persons believe in God. They remember Him so often. They swear by God. They thank Him for their good luck and sometimes curse Him for their bad luck. Generally, man approaches God in times of difficulty. At times, he seeks favours from Him. Unforeseen events, accidents, earthquakes, and other natural calamities are considered by man as the curse of God. Similarly, windfall profits and other lucky events are attributed to God as blessings. So much so that God pervades the whole life of an ordinary man.

B. God and Religions

Almost all religions profess faith in God. Dictionary defines God as "an object of excessive devotion, Supreme Being, the creator, an object of worship." The Vedas declare him, "Existent, conscious, formless, Almighty, just, merciful, infinite, eternal, omni-potent,

omni-present, omniscient, creator of universe, imperishable." The Bible speaks of God as "Lord Almighty, eternal, heavenly father, invisible, omnipresent, omniscient, creator, preserver...". The Holy Quran describes God as "Creator, sustainer, merciful, kind, forgiving, omnipresent, omniscient, the truth, the only reality...." Even Buddha could not deny the existence of God. When asked about the existence of God, the Buddha kept mum. He neither affirmed nor denied the existence of God.

All religions have constructed places of worship of God. They have evolved intricate ways of worship of God and expect all believers to have faith in Him, in His greatness, in His retributive justice and in His kindness. All religions expect man to always remember God and abide by His commandments.

C. God and Philosophers :

Most philosophers have supported the existence of God and have advanced the following arguments in favour of their affirmation :

a. All entities have their creator or producer. Similarly, this universe must also have a creator. That creator is named as God.

b. Nature is lifeless and inert. It has been enlivened and activated by some conscious element. That conscious element is God.

c. There must be some force sustaining this universe. That force or power is God.

d. Beginning of the new universe, after its dissolution, is possible only through some agency. That agency is God.

e. All religious scriptures affirm the existence of God almost on similar lines. There is no apparent reason to doubt their affirmation. Therefore, God does exist.

However, there is another system of philosophy, namely Materialistic philosophy which categorically denies the existence of God. In India, the materialist philosopher, Brihaspati propagated the Carvak philosophy which states that there is no creator of this universe. Everything is happening by itself from its own nature.

"The fire is hot, the water cold,

Refreshing cool the breeze of morn,

By whom came this variety,

From their own nature was it born."

But such materialism does not have many followers. They oppose the existence of God for the sake of argument only. In day-to-day life, they accept Him, worship Him and swear by Him. So, belief in God is almost universal and most people in all climes and times have believed in God.

D. God and Saints

Saints go deeper into their relationship with God. They feel that God cannot be seen with senses or comprehended with reason because He is far beyond perception, reason, inference and analogy. He is the most subtle and can only be realised through spiritual experiences. The great American psychologist, William James has described many such spiritual experiences of a number of saints in his book, "The Varieties of Religious Experiences." There are similar stories about Kabir, Mirabai, Tulsidas, Ravidas, Rama Krishan Paramhansa and many others about their mystical spiritual experiences and relationship with God. Necessary pre-requisites for having such experiences about God are listed by William James as under :

a. Asceticism

b. Strength of soul

c. Purity

d. Charity

e. Temperance in eating, drinking and life-style

f. Simplicity in day-to-day life

g. Chastity

h. Non-pampering of the body

Mental preparation for such a life also presumes :

a. A feeling of being in a wider world than that of this world's selfish little interests.

b. Intellectual and real conviction in the existence of an Ideal Power.

c. A sense of intimate personal relationship of the ideal power with one's own life.

d. A willing self-surrender to the control of such an ideal power.

e. A shifting of emotional centre towards loving and harmonious affection.

Anybody who can acquire these pre-requisite qualifications for God-realisation, can have almost the same spiritual experiences, though the experiences of different persons may differ in accordance with their mental preparation.

Swami Yoganand, the author of "Autobiography of a Yogi" has further elaborated this aspect and indicated the path for God-realisation as under :

"When by Pratyahar (interiorising the attention) and Pranayama (switching off the five sense organs and controlling the life-force), one disconnects his mind from the senses and contacts God, he perceives the inner world. His first discovery of God is through the cosmic sound Om.... This cosmic sound is the cradle song of cosmic creation, continuously oozing out from the pores of space like smoothly flowing oil. It is like the peal of a cosmic gong, reverberating, energising all creation.... This cosmic sound emanates from all atoms. The cosmic motor is working and Aum is its resultant sound...... This force had projected creation and the vibrations of its sound still uphold creation..... The finer vibrations of the all-pervading cosmic sound of Aum roam the universe. They are subtler than the ether, hidden beneath all cosmic forces. The Aum sound, being the emanation of countless high and low vibrations, is inaudible to physical ears. It is interactively audible only to the astral ears. In His aspect of cosmic sound, God also manifests as cosmic bliss, cosmic wisdom, cosmic love, cosmic light and cosmic life-force. These are definite qualities of God." Once one is in touch with the cosmic sound, he begins sharing the cosmic bliss, cosmic wisdom, cosmic love, cosmic light and cosmic life-force. There is nothing beyond this for man to realise. However, all these attributes of God are adequately visible in the universe.[1]

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1. Yogada Satsanga Lessons in Self-realisation. Lessons no. 29, 116. Kollata, Yogoda Satsanga Society of India.

The above passage needs some explanation to understand its real meaning.

It is not possible for every body to have a realisation of God. Most people can only have faith in God on the testimony of scriptures or saints. Realisation of God is normally possible only after passing through the following stages :

a. Adequate practice of Yama and Niyama such that the vicious mental tendencies get subsided and the virtuous mental tendencies get strengthened.
b. Through the practice of Asana, adequate control has been acquired on body organs and body systems, such that they have attained a good level of health and operational efficiency.
c. Through the practice of Pranayama, adequate control has been acquired on sense organs and moderation is observed in the enjoyment of pleasures of the senses.
d. The mind has become well trained in concentration for a pretty long him on a subject unaffected by the surrounding environment.

God is a force which operates throughout the universe at all times. This force surcharges the universe with (a) bliss (b) wisdom and (c) love. Manifestation of this force is through (a) sound (b) light and (c) consciousness.

The sound produced by such operations of God-force is like the sound of Om emanating through the vibrations. While the light is like the light of hundreds of blazing suns, Consciousness in the form of life-force which enlivens and energizes every elementary particle of this universe. The sound and light are not accessible to the gross ears and gross eyes but only to the astral ears and astral eyes which need to be developed to a very high level of sensitivity through the practice of yoga. So much has been achieved so far by many yogis and it is on their affirmation and also experience of his own that Swami Yoganand had made the above assertion.

By following this spiritual path, anybody can experience God-realisation. "This path is long, slippery and arduous — yes, but worth the effort. However, it is not for everybody. It demands a very high price, which everybody cannot be expected to pay."

E. God and Science

Almost all scientists profess some religion and almost all religions propagate belief in God. Scientists swear by God and believe in His Existence. Isaac Newton, the founder of Modern Science, firmly believed in God and called His laws as eternal, universal and infallible— even divine. Newton built the super structure of his science on the foundations of these eternal laws of God. But still God does not find a place in the text books of science. It is because God is beyond the scope of scientific enquiry, is beyond the reach of scientific apparatus and methods, and even beyond the aims of scientific investigations.

However, since the middle of the 20th century, scientists had begun to realise that they could not proceed further in their investigations without including consciousness within their scope. The discovery of String Theory has taken science to the last constituent of matter which is less than 10^{-30} cm. while the nucleus of an atom is about 10^{-13} cm. across. The nucleus is about a hundred million billion times bigger than the String. So the present instruments of science cannot hope to go beyond their present limitations.

Modern science is now dealing with not only physical entities but also non-physical entities like string. Existence of non-physical entities has been accepted by science. Also, relevance of consciousness of the scientist himself is now being considered essential in scientific investigations.

Scientists have come to the conclusion that there is an essential inter-connection of the universe. Quantum Theory reveals a basic oneness of the universe. However, it is not clear to scientists as yet what provides this oneness to the universe. Science is not in a position as yet to say anything about the existence of God, but it cannot outright deny the existence of something which provides unity to the universe. Even an agnostic like Gregory David Roberts, while explaining his views on the existence of God says, "I am a rational being. I have investigated all major faiths of the world and none of them provide any evidence for the existence of a Divine Being. That does not mean a divine being does not exist My personal belief is that there is a God.... God is the absolute and perfect

expression of all positive characteristics. Life is a perfect characteristic. God is perfect life. Love is a perfect characteristic. God is the absolute expression of love."

The Hindustan Times, Dated. 06.12.09

F. God in the Gita

The Gita wants us to believe in God. However, five manifestations of God have been mentioned in the Gita.

a. God as Brahman

b. God as Ishwar

c. God as incarnation

d. God as some personalised entity

e. God as Self.

The concept of God did not appear in India ready-made and fixed. It evolved through the ages as a result of intuitive perception by different saints under different circumstances. Their intuitive experiences were so intense that the manifestations of God in their mind found expression in common day-to-day language and they articulated it for the benefit of others. Many of their views continued to be believed and accepted by succeeding generations, without negating the previous ones. So today, we find in India a spectrum of the visions of God coexisting side by side. The Gita presents a synthesis of these various concepts of God and asks man to stabilise his faith in any one of them because all of them are manifestations of the same one God. (Gita IV-4, VII-21, IX-25, XI-3).

a. God as Brahman :

Brahman is the most subtle concept of God and is represented by the aphorism. "Aum-Tat-Sat (XVIII-23)." Aum implies absolute supremacy, Tat implies universality and Sat implies eternality. So, supreme, universal and eternal concept of God is Brahman. He is formless, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient and supreme Lord of this universe. All religions accept this concept of God.

b. God as Ishwar :

It is believed that there are three forces constituting one main cosmic force– God. These three forces are responsible for creation,

sustenance and dissolution of this universe. The creator of this universe is called Ishwar or Brahma (different from Brahman above). Vishnu, the second force is responsible for the maintenance or sustenance of this universe. The third force is named as Maheswar which is responsible for the dissolution of this universe. (XIII-16) The Lord Ishwar endows the whole creation with eternal existence, consciousness, activity and interaction.

c. God as Incarnation :

Great saints through their meditation had an intuitive subjective experience of God as Brahman. Some saint-artists transformed their subjective experience of God into an objective visual entity of God in human form and endowed it with all attributes of God. This concept of God persisted for a long time. It was presumed that these incarnations are of God Vishnu who is responsible for the sustenance of the universe (IV-6). Vishnu has to ensure that righteousness prevails in the universe. So, whenever there is a decline of righteousness, Vishnu has to incarnate himself in this world to re-establish righteousness and punish the wicked. (IV-7-9) The concept of incarnation is popular only in Hindu philosophy and mythology. As a gratitude to Vishnu and for the beneficial actions of Vishnu, Hindus have established places of worship for Vishnu and his incarnations. The fact that the incarnations and their representative idols are just symbols of the one unmanifested God Brahman has unfortunately been completely forgotten and an entirely new concept of God has taken root in the minds of Hindus.

d. God as Personalised Entity or Deities :

The concept of incarnated gods was further extended to include in the category of gods– all those who could be instrumental to facilitate the approach of man to God Brahman or even to God incarnations. Consequently, a number of deities were visualised, idolised and accepted as mediums to reach God. They were all objectified with human form and human attributes. Thus, some Hindu devotees moved farther and farther away from the concept of God Brahman and reposed their faith in lesser gods (IV-11, VII-21, 22, 23).

e. God as Self

There are clear references in the Vedas, Upanishads and other scriptures about a divine element in the inner recesses of man which

guides him to follow the righteous course of action. (X-20, XI-40, 41). A mantra occurs in Rigveda (Rig.164.20) which says, "There are two birds having beautiful feathers and associated with each other, as also sitting on one and the same tree, with this difference however, that while one of them eats sweet fruits of the tree, the other one just casts its glances all around without eating the fruit." This mantra is so important that it appears in Atharvaveda (IX.14.20) and in Svetashvatar Upanishad (IV.6) also. The human body is compared to a tree on which reside two birds– human mind and divine mind. The human mind enjoys the fruits of the tree, while the divine mind just glances all around. This clearly indicates the presence of God inside man. Some call this divine mind as the inner self.

G. Conclusion

Most men believe in God. However, sometimes some doubts lurk in their minds about the retributive justice of God. Here are some often asked questions about God and the answers usually given by saints to those questions. However, it is for every individual to respond to these questions and seek their own answers on the basis of their personal life experiences. They should have firm convictions about God in their mind and lead their life accordingly. It is, of course, important what you believe but it is equally and perhaps more important how convinced and firm you are in your beliefs. The Gita wants us to meditate on our life experiences and take decisions about God accordingly. And thus, be our own light.

Since God is the most fundamental concept in life, it must be meditated upon most seriously to lay strong foundations of a divine life.

Questions

Q.1. What is God?

Ans. God is the name given by man to those unknown, unidentified and invisible Cosmic Force(s) which are supposed to operate in the universe with amazing regularity, bewildering precision and in accordance with some infallible laws and also sometimes throwing up such sudden and surprising events for which man finds no apparent, explicable and convincing reason.

Q.2. Does God really exist?

Ans. Yes, God of the above description really exists.

Q.3. Is god omni-present?

Ans. Yes, because the above facts are visible throughout the universe.

Q.4. Is God eternal?

Ans. Yes. It appears to be so because the above facts have been known to be true throughout the recorded history.

Q.5. Is God just?

Ans. Yes, in most cases, there are explicable and comprehensible laws operating in the universe.

Q.6. Is God beneficent?

Ans. Yes, because most of the phenomena and operations going on in the universe have been found to be for the welfare and benefit of man.

Q.7. Is God merciful?

Ans. Yes, because minor digressions from and violations of the infallible laws of God by man do not entail any adverse effect or punishment.

Q.8. Does God dispense retributive justice?

Ans. Yes, because continued and wilful digressions and violations of cosmic laws definitely lead to suffering.

Q.9. Is God omniscient?

Ans. Yes, because most of the natural operations in the universe are autonomous, self sustaining and self correcting.

Q.10. Is God omni-potent?

Ans. Yes, because laws of God are still infallible and are operative in the universe.

Q.11. Is it necessary to believe in God?

Ans. No. However, God cannot be wished away. He will still exist inspite of your disbelief. You may or may not accept that there is a law of gravitation. But it will still be true.

Q.12. Is it useful to believe in God?

Ans. Yes, definitely. It puts an end to your mental vacillation,

enhances your self-confidence and strengthens your will-power.

Q.13. What are the likely benefits of believing in God?

Ans. You will begin to inculcate the attributes of God — bliss, wisdom and love. God cannot help you to get rid of your suffering but He can definitely help you to gain happiness. He will not take care of your past. He will help you to take care of your future.

Q.14. Can we ever see God?

Ans. No. However, you can visualise and realise God and his attributes.

Q.15. Can God be investigated through the scientific approach?

Ans. No. The scope of modern science is limited to the study and investigation of matter. At the most, you will end up with the String Theory and M. Theory. The exhilarating journey of science has reached the terminal station of Elementary Particle.

Q.16. What should be done to proceed further?

Ans. Have a scientific attitude and adopt a saintly life-style.

Q.17. What are the perceptible manifestations of God?

Ans. Sound, light and consciousness.

Q.18. What are the attributes of God?

Ans. God is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, creator, sustainer, destroyer of this universe, Almighty, just, merciful, imperishable.

Q.19. What are the functions performed by God?

Ans. God and or his forces are supposed to perform the following functions :

a. To energise and activate all elementary particles in the universe so as to enable them to be active, responsive and interact with one another.
b. To initiate and sustain the cosmic process of universal dynamics.
c. To implement the cosmic, universal, eternal and infallible laws called Rita for the sustenance of the universe.
d. To maintain the ecological balance and operational equilibrium in the universe.

e. To ensure retributive justice in the universe.

f. To correct aberrations in the universe, if any.

It is generally presumed that all those phenomena which are not being performed and controlled by man are being performed by God.

Some more questions

Q.1. What is the relationship between God and Universe?

Ans. Universe is the handmaid of God to fulfil His purpose.

Q.2. What is the purpose of God?

Ans. To make the universe godly by infusing more and more of His three attributes namely– Bliss, Wisdom and Love into the constituents of the universe– matter, energy and life.

Q.3. What is the relationship between God and Man?

Ans. The same as between a father and son.

Q.4. What is the duty of man towards God?

Ans. To meditate on bliss, wisdom and love and translate them into actions in his daily life.

Q.5. What is the best representative word for God?

Ans. Om or Ameen or Amin.

Q.6. How to remember and worship God?

Ans. Proceed as under :

a) Early morning or late night when you are comparatively free from the humdrum of worldly life, sit at a calm and quiet place.

b) Be still and feel relaxed.

c) Meditate on God and his three attributes — viz. Bliss, Wisdom and Love.

d) Meditate on the cosmic laws of God. Continue for fifteen minutes or more.

e) Observe the commandments of God.

Q.7. What is meditation on Bliss?

Ans. "How you can increase happiness in yourself and in people

around you through your thoughts, words and actions." This is meditation on Bliss.

Q.8. What is meditation on Wisdom?

Ans. "How you can help yourself and other people around you to develop the potential abilities of man through your thoughts, words and actions." This is meditation on Wisdom.

Q.9. What is meditation on Love?

Ans. "How you can improve more harmonious relationship among the people around you through your thoughts, words and actions." This is meditation on Love.

Q.10. What is the Cosmic Law of God?

Ans. Retributive justice is the Cosmic Law of God.

Q.11. What is Retributive Justice or Law of Karam?

Ans. Retributive Justice or Law of Karma implies that there is a corresponding reward or punishment for conformity or transgression of all your thoughts, words and actions from the commandments of God and His three attributes.

Q.12. What is meditation on Cosmic Law?

Ans. To be careful in daily life that all your thoughts, words and actions are in conformity with the commandments of God. This is meditation on Cosmic Law.

Q.13. What is the benefit of remembering and worshipping God?

Ans. Worship is just a mechanism which reminds us of God and our relationship with Him. It must be followed by meditation and inculcation of His three attributes— Bliss, Wisdom and Love. All this will inspire us for the next two important steps:

a. Self improvement through development of our potentialities to the optimum.

b. Performance of our ordained duties to the best of own capacity. That will lead to end of suffering and attainment of happiness.

Q.14. How to be sure of this statement?

Ans. Try and have direct experience of the truth of this statement yourself by practising it in your daily life. Be your own light.

It would be quite rewarding to go over these questions once again and then write their answers as you feel. This is what Socrates meant when he said "Know thyself." Or better still when Yama said to Nachiketa, "Know Thy Self." So, now try to know thy SELF by answering these questions yourself.

Summary

1. It is not necessary to believe in God but it is useful. However, it is essential to believe in Goodness and it is best to believe in both God and Goodness. Both mean the same and both feel the same.

2. What is Goodness? Goodness is relative and not absolute. It depends upon your circumstances. What is good under one circumstances may not necessarily be good under other circumstances. Also, what is good for you may not be good for another person. But still broadly speaking some guidelines can be stated.

Whatever thoughts, ideas, emotions, feelings, sensations, utterances and actions produce the following effects in you are good for you :

a. generate positive, constructive and useful mental tendencies, habits and life-style.
b. give rise to calmness, peace and satisfaction.
c. prompt towards moderation in the enjoyment of pleasures of the senses.
d. help to maintain a balance in the development of the four aspects of life, namely– physical, psychological, social and spiritual.
e. generate a feeling of joy and happiness.
f. help development of your potential capacities.
g. lead to more efficient performance of your ordained duties.
h. promote more harmonious relationship.
i. affect favourably your breath-rate, heart-beat, pulse-rate, and other physiological systems of the body.

Whatever produces any of the above effects in you is good for you. On the other hand, whatever produces the opposite effect in you, is not good for you. Goodness in our world is a manifestation

of God Himself (Gita X 41). The nearer we are to such goodness, surely, nearer we are to God. The measure of spirituality is 'goodness.'

3. To know what is 'Good', contact your Divine Mind which is always present inside you. It is always for you, with you and it is your best friend. To contact your Divine Mind, proceed in the following manner :

a. Before going to bed, sit in yogic posture and meditate on the problem in hand for five minutes or so. Go over the whole situation and state in clear terms the question to which an answer is sought. But be honest and state the true facts without any reservation. Remain filled with virtuous mental tendencies. Also, have no pre-meditated opinion. Sincerely seek guidance from the Divine Mind. Be sure that you can never deceive your Divine Mind.

b. Wake up early morning around 4.00 A.M. Wash your hands and face and sit in yogic posture. Concentrate your mind on the mid-point between the eye-brows the seat of your Divine Mind. Meditate again on the question for about 30 minutes. Most likely you will get the answer.

4. Worship of God in any form simply serves as a reminder to our commitment to the following :-

a. To develop our potential faculties to the optimum.

b. To perform our ordained duties sincerely

c. To enjoy pleasures of the world with moderation.

d. To exercise control on our sense organs, mind, intellect and ego.

5. Worship of God cannot absolve you from retributive justice of your actions.

6. Establish your relationship with God in early life. However, it is for you to decide what is to be the nature of this relationship and how this relationship is to be established and sustained.

III. Universe

A. Introduction

The Gita presents a picture of this universe and the process of its evolution. God is said to be the seed and nature is said to be the receiver of the seed. The universe is said to be the manifestation of union of the two (VII-6,13,14). This world is compared to an inverted peepal tree whose roots are upward and whose branches are spread out all through. This world is said to be saturated with three Gunas which have bound man to the world and which are the cause of all interplay in the universe (XIV-5). This metaphorical view of the universe and the world are quite interesting. But it does not present a realistic picture of the universe and the world as we see it. During the last two hundred years, science has made many discoveries about the evolution and nature of the universe. It will be interesting to know what science has to say, and then explore the relationship of man to this world.

B. The Universe

At the time when the Gita was composed, only a very small part of our present universe was known. Today, we know much more about the universe. Our universe is too big. Let us have some idea of the size of our universe. The distances in the universe are so great, that they cannot be measured and expressed in terms of kilometres or miles. They are measured in terms of light years. One light year means the distance which will be covered by a ray of light during a period of one year. The speed of light is 186,282 miles per second. So, in a year, light will travel 5,880,000,000,000 miles or nearly six trillion miles.

Our universe is said to consist of billions of galaxies. A galaxy is pictured as a giant lens about 300,000 light years in diameter. Our earth is a part of one of such galaxies known as the Milky Way. It is one of the largest galaxies of the universe. The diameter of our galaxy is 1,00,000 light years. The thickness of our galaxy at the centre is 20,000 light years. It is a spiral galaxy.

At present, only a little is known about the universe and even that is not certain. Even about our galaxy, we have only a limited knowledge. But an average person does not need to know much

about the universe as it does not affect his daily life. It is sufficient to knwon that our universe is too big for us.

C. The Solar System

Our Solar System lies in one of the spiral arms of the Milky Way Galaxy. Our Solar System consists of one Star— the Sun and eight planets. Our earth is the third planet from the Sun. The earth moves around the Sun in 365.26 days in an elliptical form with a minimum distance of 146.9 million km (91.3 million miles) and maximum distance of 151.9 million km (94.4 million miles) at a speed of 29.77 km per second.

Much is known about the Solar System and about its constituents. All such knowledge has been gathered through time by astronomers. With new methods of investigations, more and more facts are coming to light. Man landed on moon in 1963. Efforts are being made to gather more information about Jupiter and the other planets. Much more in known to day about the Sun.

All this knowledge is being used by scientists, geographers, astronomers and even by astrologers to make predictions. However, an average person is not concerned with all this intricate knowledge, since this does not affect him in a significant way.

D. The Earth

There is a habitable band within the solar system around the Sun which extends to 40 million miles and within a distance of 91.3 million miles and 94.4 million miles from the Sun. Earth is the only planet between 91.3 and 94.4 million miles from the Sun. This safe distance from the Sun has saved the earth both from freezing and evaporating. The average temperature on the surface of the earth is 59^{0}F which is suitable for water to exist in its natural form. The axis tilt of 23.27^0 and the oval orbit gives the earth days and nights of different duration, different temperature, and different rainfall and environment. These factors have provided abundant variety of vegetation, flora, fauna, etc. on the earth. Another advantage to earth is complementary nature of vegetation and animal life in the maintenance of right composition of oxygen and carbon-dioxide, etc. All these factors have made earth the home of Man.[1]

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1. Giles Sparrow. The Solar System. London, Ambar Books Ltd. 2006 Page. 14

E. The Sub-atomic Region

The fourth important component of our universe is the world of the atom which has been extensively explored by the scientists during the 20th century. As against the vast distances in the galaxies, the dimensions in an atom are extremely small. Previously, an atom was considered to be the building block of our world. But now it is not so. Today, the ultimate building block of this universe is supposed to be the string where it is less then 10^{-30} cm in space. So much so that the ultimate reality of this universe is no longer considered as physical. The search for the ultimate reality is still on.

So, this is our universe today. Since the days of the Gita, science has discovered many new facts about the universe. However, much more remains to be discovered for a better comprehension of the universe. There are some questions relating to the universe and particularly to the world which are important for man and which he must understand for a better knowledge of his physical environment. Such knowledge affects his thinking and beliefs, and has a great effect on his health and welfare also. Some of these questions are :

a. How the universe came to be created?

b. The ultimate Reality.

c. Fabric of the universe.

d. Phenomena in the universe.

e. Nature of the universe.

f. Future of the universe.

F. Creation of universe

a) Religions

Almost all religions have said something about the creation of the universe. It may be interesting to know the opinion of different religions on this subject.

(i) Vedic view : There is a section in Rigveda dealing with this subject called "Nasadiya Sukta".[1] It has seven mantras. The text of

1. Nasadiya Sukta 1,2,3.7
नासंदासीन्नो सदांसीत्तदानीं,

the mantras states as under :

"Then, that is in the beginning, there was neither Asat (non-existent) nor Sat (existent). Then death, that is the perishable, visible, moral universe was not existing. The solitary thing was breathing, that is, throbbing by its own power without there being any air. Except that, there was nothing. That thing was covered by illusory Maya. The seed that is the seed of the mind (Kaama) first came into existence. The rays emanating from that solitary thing initiated the process of development." At the end, it is frankly admitted, "Only God may know the place from where the development of this existent came about or even He may not be knowing it." (Rig.X.129.1-6)

(ii) The Bible :

The Bible says, "In the beginning, the earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep. God made the firmament and divided the waters which were under the firmament, from the waters which were above the firmament." Then God said, Let the earth bring forth grass– the herb that yield seed and the fruit tree that yields fruit, according to its kind, whose seed is in itself on the earth "and it was so." (Genesis.1.2.7) The Holy Quran ascribes the creation of universe to God.

नासीद्रजो नो व्योमा परो यत्।
किमाबरीवः कुह कस्य शर्म,
न्नम्यः किमासीद् गहनं गर्म्यारम्।।१।।
न मृत्युरांसीदमृतं न तर्हि,
न रात्र्या अह आसीत्प्रकेतः।
आनीदवातं स्वधया तदेकं,
तस्माद्धान्यन्न परः किंचनाःऽऽस।।२।।
तम आसीत्तमसां गूलमग्रे,
ऽप्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमा इदम्।
तुच्छेनाभ्वपिहितं यदासीत्
तपसस्तन्महिना ऽजायतैकम्।।३।।
इयं विसृष्टिर्यत आवभूव,
यदि वा दधे यदि वा न।
यो अस्याध्यक्षः परमेव्योमन्,
सा अंगवेद यदि वा न वेद।।४।। Rig. X. 129.

(iii) Lord Buddha :

Gautam Buddha could not find any reason to believe that the universe had a beginning or will have an end. He believed that the universe is ever existing and ever changing and it will ever remain so.

b) Scientists :

Earlier some scientists had endorsed the views of Lord Buddha and had said that there was no beginning or creation of the universe. It is a continuous process through eternity, resulting in a steady-state universe. But later, scientists advocated that the universe began as a very thin gas. Slowly, it condensed into a huge cosmic egg. All of a sudden, there was a Big Bang or explosion forming stars and galaxies. Later, in 1964, further evidence in favour of Big Bang could be gathered. Consequently, it is now generally accepted that the Big Bang did take place and the notion of continuous creation was abandoned. The Big Bang is believed to have happened some 15 billion years ago. Today, scientists are trying to recreate the circumstances as they existed at the time of the Big Bang and to study the process of the creation of the universe.[1]

In view of the above, you may believe in any one of the above or have your own opinion about the creation of the universe different from all these.

G. The ultimate reality

(a) Religious view

The Vedas speak of Brahman or God as the ultimate and the only reality. Another name for Brahman is consciousness. Everything in this universe has emanated from Brahman. The Upanishads also support this view. However, later on, ultimate reality was supposed to be consisting of two entities (a) Brahman or consciousness, an imperishable entity and (b) nature or Prakriti as the inert and ever-changing entity. Universe has emanated from a fusion of these two entities. The Gita also upholds the same view which is popularly known as the Sankhya view. An elaborate process of such evolution of universe has been described in the scriptures, particularly in Sankhya Sutra.

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1. Asimov, Isaac. New Guide to Science. London, Penguin Books. 1986. page 44.

Other religions :

"In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God." (John 1.1) Thus, the ultimate reality is accepted to be God and His 'word'. The holy Quran accepts Allah alone as the ultimate reality. Lord Buddha states that there is no ultimate reality. The entire phenomena of the universe is always in a flux and ever changing.

(b) Views of scientists :

Science is primarily concerned with matter, natural forces and their relationship during interaction. One of the problems with which scientists have been grappling with is to identify the smallest indivisible constituent of matter. Until recently, it was stated by scientists that matter is composed of particles– electrons and quarks which are indivisible. They have no size and no internal structure. These particles combine in various ways to produce protons, neutrons and wide variety of atoms and molecules– making up every element in the universe. It was also believed that these particles are like dots.

But now it has been revealed that every particle is composed of tiny filaments of energy, some hundred billion times smaller than a single atomic nucleus. This filament of energy is shaped like a little string which vibrates in different patterns. These vibrations produce different particle properties. These particles can be identified as quarks, neutrino, etc. Thus, not particles, but strings are the ultimate reality. But no one has ever seen a string or shall ever be able to see it. Also, it is not ruled out that these strings might be composed of yet finer ingredients.

(c) Views of saints

Saints assert that there are two ultimate entities— God and Thought. Thought when activated by the cosmic forces of God, splits into two— thoughts of enjoyment of pleasure of the senses and thoughts of entities which could provide such enjoyment to the senses. The first one leads to the evolution of sense organs, mind, intellect, ego, etc. culminating in the world of the living beings and the other leads to the evolution of the sensations of flavour, smell, colour, shape, sound, etc. culminating into atoms of elements and objects which provide means of satisfaction to the living beings.

The Gita also speaks of the Kaam or desire as the root cause of everything. Yoga Sutra of Patanjali III.44 and III.47 state the sequential stages of evolution of matter and evolution of mind from the one common source of Kaam or thought.

Sutra III-44 and III-47 do not directly relate to the creation of Universe. However, they also state the sequential stages of evolution of matter-stuff and mind-stuff respectively. The fifth and the last stage of both is the desire and its satisfaction or Kaam. Thus, Kaam is stated to be the ultimate reality of matter-stuff as well as mind-stuff.

H. The fabric of the universe

During the last two hundred years, scientists have been struggling to unravel the mystery about the fabric of the universe. Let us see what they have to say about the ultimate constituents of this universe.

a. The scientists

It was believed from a very early period in history that this universe is constituted by two elements- matter and mind. Later, it was proved by an Italian chemist, Antoine in 1789 that matter can neither be created nor destroyed.

Since 1800, scientists have been trying to find out what this universe is made of or what the fabric of this universe is. By 1808, it had been established by the British scientist Dalton that this universe was made up of tiny pieces of matter called Atom. But later investigations proved that atom itself is constituted by still tiny particles. By 1930, it was established that "atoms consist of a nucleus, containing protons and neutrons, that is surrounded by a swarm of orbiting electrons."[1]

The Physicists have now probed the structure of matter to scales of about a billionth of a billionth to a metre and shown that everything consists of some combinations of eighteen elementary particles of matter and natural forces.

This was the story upto 1968. Since then, many more elementary particles have been hypothesised. However, they are still unidentified and at the level of concepts. But it has been confirmed that elementary particles are particles with no measurable internal

1. Brian Green. The Elegant Universe. New York, Vintage Books. 2000, page 7

structure and they have no other particles inside them. According to our present knowledge, they are the final fundamental entities at sub-atomic level. Just as all English words are made up of the 26 letters of the English alphabet, similarly everything in this universe consists of some combination of these eighteen elementary particles.

But that is not the end of the story. When further examined, it was revealed that elementary particles were not point-like but consisted of tiny one-dimensional loop or two freely moving ends in addition to the loop. These hanging, moving ends were like vibrating, oscillating, dancing filaments of matter or energy. They came to be known as strings. Just as the strings on a violin have resonant frequencies at which they produce musical notes, similarly the strings in elementary particles produce different vibratory patterns based on their mass and electric charge. These resonant patterns of vibrations are the properties radiated by the strings of the elementary particles. "Feelings of joy, sorrow or boredom are nothing but chemical reactions in the brain of the vibrating strings." (The Elegant Universe, page, 16) This explanation of the fabric of the universe is known as the String Theory. This was the story upto 1990. Since then, answer to many more questions are being sought through the String Theory itself. At present, the relationship of this musical symphony of strings is being related to different dimensions like time, space, etc. through other explanations. This new theory about these explanations has assumed the name of M Theory. The results of such investigations are slowly coming to notice. The scientists are upbeat about their new experiment called the "Large Hadron Collider (LHC) conducted on 30th March, 2010 near Geneva." They hope to reach the final explanation about the fabric of the universe. Let us hope that they succeed.

b. The saints

The saints and seers through their intuitional investigations and by reaching higher levels of consciousness during meditation had reached their own conclusions. "The earliest seers of the Vedic period have presented the integrity and essentially of Consciousness as the most fundamental reality. It is consciousness which is the most fundamental reality that the things are made of."[1]

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1. S.P. Singh, Vedic Vision of Consciousness and Reality. New Delhi, Centre for Studies in Civilization. 2004, Page xix

The views of later seers, particularly Kapil, as expressed in Sankhya Darshan is somewhat different. He says that the ultimate reality is constituted by the Supreme Consciousness and Nature or Purush and Prakriti (Sankhya I.69). The Gita also accepts this view (XIV).

These are some of the opinions about the ultimate reality of the universe. Which one is correct— it is not possible to say because there is no way to verify the veracity of the affirmations. Scientists are honest enough to say that at the present moment, this is what they have to state. They will elaborate further, as and when they make further advance in their investigations. We should have no hesitation to accept that incomplete answer. For the rest, one may use his own judgement or intuition and accept whatever appeals to him or one may have no opinion or an opinion of his own.

I. Phenomena in the universe

Such questions are sometimes asked, "How is this universe going on for thousands and millions of years? What are the laws operating it? What are the processes? Who is implementing the laws? Who is controlling the processes?" Obviously, there are no complete and convincing answers to these questions. Religions blissfully assert that the great Lord is the master of the universe. He is running and controlling the universe. It is His universe and He is running it within His discretion. However, scientists and philosophers have their own opinions.

a. Scientists

Scientists say that the universe is running on the basis of definite laws. "The whole history of science has been the gradual realisation that events do not happen in an arbitrary manner, but that they reflect a certain underlying order, which may or may not be divinely inspired." (Stephen Hawking. A Brief History of Time. Page 129)[1]. So far they have identified Laws like the law of Unity, the law of Contiguity, the law of Symmetry, the law of Interaction, etc. Also, they have identified the following natural processes which operate under definite conditions :

Attraction - Repulsion

1. Stephen Hawkins. A Brief History of Time. London. Banton Books. 1988, Page 129.

Radiation	-	Absorption
Integration	-	Disintegration
Expansion	-	Contraction
Conduction	-	Insulation
Assimilation	-	Excretion
Evaporation	-	Condensation
Mobility	-	Inertia
Push	-	Retardation
Growth	-	Decay

The scientists have also identified four natural forces– i) Gravitational force, ii) Electro-magnetic force, iii) Strong force, iv) Weak force. They are trying to understand more fully, their operation and their effect on elementary particles of matter.

The running of the universe is a function of the elementary particles of matter, the elementary particles of natural forces and certain other dimensions. The whole process appears to be a cyclic change from strings to atoms, molecules and compounds and back from compounds to molecules, atoms and strings. Scientists are yet to understand many more laws which control such processes and operations. A lot has been known but a lot more is yet to be known.

Vedic thought has brought in the concept of Maya to explain the phenomena of the universe. It is asserted that Maya has covered the whole universe with an illusion and through its influence it has transformed the nature of all the objects of the universe. Through the operation of the three gunas and ignorance, it is sustaining the universe. This concept is of great importance and is treated in detail in the next chapter.

b. Saint-philosophers

Saint-Philosophers have also said much about the running of the universe. However, we may consider the views of two main philosophers— Buddha and Patanjali.

i. Buddha

Lord Buddha had adopted a different approach. He did not believe in God and Soul. However, he believed that the world has been the same forever. It was never created nor it will ever come to an end. He believed in (a) natural forces and (b) consciousness or

Kamma as repository of the end results of actions of man. He explained that matter is always in a state of flux — disintegrating and integrating from one state to another. He explained the evolution of consciousness or Kamma through the twelve successive stages called the Law of Dependent Origination. The desires of man and his running after pleasures of the senses are the causes of his eternal transmigration. Thus, this universe is going on for thousands of years.

ii. Patanjali

Rishi Patanjali in his 'Yoga Darshan' appears to present the following ideas - (III.44, 47, Yoga Darshan)[1]

a. The ultimate entities of the universe are as under :

(i) Cosmic Force or God.

(ii) Prakriti or the three gunas — Sattva, Rajas, Tamas.

(iii) Mind-stuff in its elementary form in a dormant state.

(iv) Matter-stuff in its elementary form in a dormant state.

b. God is beyond any change. He is the creator and sustainer of the universe. It is omni-present, omni-potent and omniscient as stated in Chapter II.

c. Prakriti is also eternal. It is constituted by the three gunas. When any region of the universe is in a dormant state, the three gunas— Sattva, Rajas, Tamas are also inoperative. When a region of the universe is to become alive, the three gunas start operating. They affect the matter-stuff and create commotion in the matter-stuff. They begin to throb and vibrate. They could be likened to strings of the String Theory.

d. When the three gunas combine with the elementary particles, the process of creation begins. The elementary particles get enlivened, energised and activated. The particles begin to acquire and inhere properties of matter.

e. On acquiring properties, the elementary particles, after passing through various stages of evolution, graduate to the status of Atoms. The process of such transformation has been well explained by the

1. स्थूल स्वरूप सूक्ष्मान्वयार्थवत्वसयंमाद् भूतजयः॥ III-44, Yoga Sutra
ग्रहणस्वरूपस्मितान्वयार्थवत्त्व संयामान्द्रिन्द्रिय जयः॥ III-47, Yoga Sutra

great saint Swami Yogeshwara Nand in his book "Atma Vigyan (Science of the Soul)" from 0ages 230 to 256. These atoms constitute the 92 naturally occurred elements of the modern Periodic Table. These atoms on the basis of their qualities can be grouped into five categories– ether, air, fire, water and earth– called elements.

f. These atoms then combine to form molecules and compounds which form the constituents of all objects of the universe. Thus, from their dormant state, the elementary particles of matter-stuff pass through five stages.

g. Patanjali in the same manner identified the states of evolution of mind- stuff. The mind-stuff is assumed to be constituted by ideas, feelings, emotions, desires, etc. (Yoga Sutra III.47). They are the end results of all our actions. They are affected by the virtuous and vicious mental tendencies. Each entity of mind-stuff constitutes an independent and autonomous unit and remains in a dormant state, till it incarnates in a body through the five stages, as stated by Patanjali.

Thus, the play of life goes on. Men will come and men will go, but the world will go on forever. This is the phenomena of this universe as explained by saints.

J. Nature of the universe

The universe is a very complex entity. It is constituted by three different, independent and autonomous regions— (a) the universe at macroscopic realm, (b) the sub-atomic or microscopic realm and (c) the terrestrial or worldly realm. But the three are so different that scientists have so far not succeeded in identifying the laws which may hold good for all the three realms. The universe is static as well as transitory. The world also appears to be the same as well as always changing at the micro level. Therefore, about the universe as well as about the world, it is said that :-

a) It is both absolute and plural
b) It is both eternal and transitory
c) It is both consistent and contradictory
d) It is both complementary and competitive
e) It is both certain and probable

f) It is both contiguous and diverse

Such statements can be counted ad infinitum. The universe and even our world are so big that no simple statement can describe its totality. So, we have to pin-point the region, realm or level of which we are speaking at that moment and then seek its nature.

Nature of universe has also been well stated by the laws of Hermetics. Hermes was the Greek god of wisdom who had stated the following nature of the phenomenal world

1. There is a unity in the universe provided by the universal mind. Energy, Consciousness or Self are the names of the same element providing this unity to the universe.
2. There is a correspondence between the physical beings and the non-physical beings i.e. gross and subtle matter. Both have consciousness, mind, energy, aims etc. and both are governed by the same principle of universal dynamics.
3. Nothing is at rest. Everything moves, vibrates. Different frequencies of vibrations and resonance give rise to differentiation in entities.
4. Everything has two opposite poles which are two extreme terminals of the same continuum. So, everything has a dual nature— quite opposite to each other, but the extremes meet.
5. Everything vibrates in a rhythm. Everything flows in and out. The movement or change is cyclic. It changes but it changes not.
6. Every cause has its effect and every effect has its cause. Thus, everything happens according to the law. Chance is just a name given to a law which has not yet been discovered.
7. Everything has two opposite gender characteristics. Male is assertive and the female is receptive. Ordinarily, masculine entities seek inordinately feminine entities and vice versa. This gives rise to the law of attraction and repulsion of entities.

K. The future of the universe

Scientists have been announcing from time to time the future of the universe and particularly the future of the world. Religions speak of the day of judgement. However, Buddha was clear in his mind that the universe shall continue to be so forever. Whatever may be

the case, we can safely say that there is going to be no change in the universe or even in our world during our life time or long thereafter. We should presume the world to continue to be the same.

However, it is the world of man which has continued to change and shall continue to change in the future as well. Also, the rate of change has now accelerated and in future, the rate of change may be even greater. So, we should be prepared to face such changes in the world of man.

L. Conclusion

We have dealt with some aspects of this universe and our world in sufficient details. We know what our world is like and how it functions. Since we live in this world, we must understand its laws of operation and how they affect us. Shri Krishna tells Arjun in the Gita that one will have to interact with the ever changing environmental factors like heat and cold and the worldly objects which give rise to pleasure and pain. Such coincidences shall always continue to happen. But they are all transitory and pass away. One must face them calmly and live with them cheerfully (Gita.II.14). This fact teaches us the art of living while avoiding suffering and attaining happiness. The Gita draws our attention to this art of living. Let us listen to the message of the Gita and live in this world happily.

Summary

1. No one is certain how this universe came into existence or how it is being sustained. There are several opinions. The widely accepted view is that this universe came into existence as a consequence of Big Bang which is supposed to have occurred about 15 billion years ago. It is also believed that it is being sustained by the cosmic laws which are eternal, universal and infallible.

2. It is also not yet certain what the ultimate reality of this universe is. It is something very subtle, beyond the reach of scientists. Philosophers say that the ultimate realities of this universe are matter-stuff; mind-stuff and cosmic forces which operate under cosmic laws. Saints believe that the ultimate reality is desire or Kaam.

3. The obvious reality of this universe is constant phenomena of integration of mind-stuff and matter-stuff into mind and matter, living beings and objects of the world and again disintegration of living beings and objects into mind-stuff and matter-stuff through various physical and chemical phenomena.

4. The characteristic features of this universe are :

a. Constant change of a cyclic nature.

b. Unity and contiguity throughout the universe.

c. Autonomy and inter-dependence of matter-stuff and mind-stuff and also autonomy and interdependence of different entities of matter-stuff and mind-stuff.

d. Constant vibration of all entities with a rhythm and resonance.

e. Sequence of cause and effect in every phenomena resulting in cosmic laws.

f. Existence in the form of two opposite extremes with a continuum.

g. Eternal phenomena resulting in its self-sustaining nature.

5. Man must understand the nature of the universe and adjust himself to the cosmic laws.

Questions

1. Why has it not been possible to know the secret of creation of this universe?
2. What in your opinion is sustaining this universe? Give reasons.
3. How can you say that the cosmic laws are infallible?
4. What is your opinion about the ultimate reality of this universe? Support your answer with arguments.
5. What is the secret of change and stability in the universe?
6. What in your opinion is the future of our earth?

* * *

IV. Maya and its Gunas

A. Introduction

It is not yet clear to the scientists how the universe came into existence after the Big Bang. For that, they are at present conducting a very ambitious experiment under a European Organisation known as CERN. On Tuesday, the 30th March, 2010, scientists carried out an experiment known as Large Hadron Collision (LHC). The results of the experiment are eagerly awaited. At present, the scientists simply affirm that the universe has come into existence through a slow process of evolution over millions of years.

However, the scriptures of almost all religions offer some explanation of their own. Broadly speaking, these explanations simply affirm that God and its cosmic powers are responsible for sustaining this universe through their mysterious processes. The explanation offered by Vedic Rishis is more elaborate. They credit the delusive cosmic force called Maya for controlling all phenomena in the Universe.

B. What is Maya?

Maya is stated to be that cosmic agency which covers the real objects of the world in such a way that their real nature gets obscured and they appear completely different from their real nature. Thus, Maya creates a sort of illusion or delusion. Maya operates under the direction and supervision of Lord Vishnu who is responsible for sustaining the universe. Maya transforms worldly objects according to its own design and makes them so attractive that man is instinctively drawn towards the objects of the world and gets entangled in worldly snares. Let us see how Maya performs its operations.

C. Maya and its operations :

During its operations, Maya is supposed to perform the following functions :

1. Maya infuses all matter-stuff and mind-stuff with energy. Thus, it enlivens and energizes them and initiates the process of evolution of matter and evolution of mind.
2. Maya brings under control all matter-stuff and mind-stuff and

subjects them to the laws of universal dynamics on such dimension as time, space etc.

3. Maya endows the matter-stuff with the followings :-

a. Gross Component	b. Subtle Component	c. Gross Qualities
(i) Ether	(i) Porosity	(i) Sound
(ii) Air	(ii) Mobility	(ii) Sensation
(iii) Fire	(iii) Luminosity	(iii) Colour and Shape
(iv) Water	(iv) Liquidity	(iv) Flavour
(v) Earth	(v) Solidity	(v) Smell

Maya endows the Mind-stuff with the followings :-

a. Sense organs

(i) Ears	(i) Listening
(ii) Skin	(ii) Feeling
(iii) Eyes	(iii) Seeing
(iv) Tongue	(iv) Tasting
(v) Nose	(v) Smelling

b. Motor organs

(i) Hands	(i) Prehension
(ii) Legs	(ii) Mobility
(iii) Tongue	(iii) Speech
(iv) Anus	(iv) Excretion
(v) Genitals	(v) Procreation

c. Subtle equipment

(i) Mind	(i) Desiring, Feeling, Emotionality
(ii) Intellect	(ii) Intellection, Thinking, Reasoning
(iii) Ego	(iii) Volition, Execution, Decision-making
(iv) Unconscious	(iv) Recollection, Real
(v) Instinct	(v) Attraction, Dependence, Bondage
vi) Aspirations	(vi) Greater and greater entanglement in worldly affairs

(vii) Intuition (viii) Revelation, Devotion, Faith

Thus, Maya establishes a strong and permanent bondage between mind-stuff and matter-stuff. Sense organs, motor organs, mind, intellect, ego and unconscious become life-long slaves of mater-stuff. Instincts and aspirations further strengthen this bondage. This is the greatest mischief played by Maya on Man. The whole burden of all religions is to free the senses, mind, intellect and ego from this slavery by having control on the unconscious, instincts and aspirations and link the mind, intellect and ego with God and His three attributes of bliss, wisdom and love. In practical terms, the salvation from this slavery does not lie in indulgence or renunciation but in moderation and balance in various aspects of life. That is also the road to Happy Living.

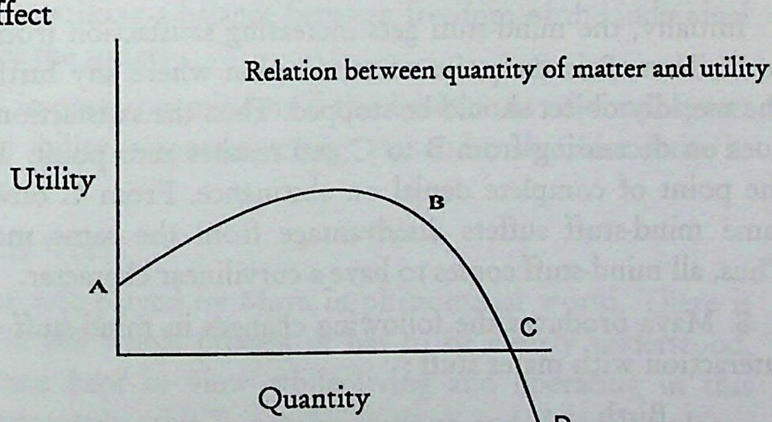
5. Maya produces the following effects in both matter-stuff and mind-stuffs :-

a. Eternal existence
b. Activity or action and reaction through interaction.
c. Radiation of their qualities and manifestation of their abilities.

6. Maya places the following limitation on matter-stuff :-

a. Initially increasing and then decreasing capacity of radiating its qualities with time and thus, ultimately its decreasing utility to benefit the mind-stuff.
b. After a limit to produce adverse effect on the mind-stuff.

(i) Increasing benefit, (ii) Decreasing benefit, (iii) Negative and harmful effect

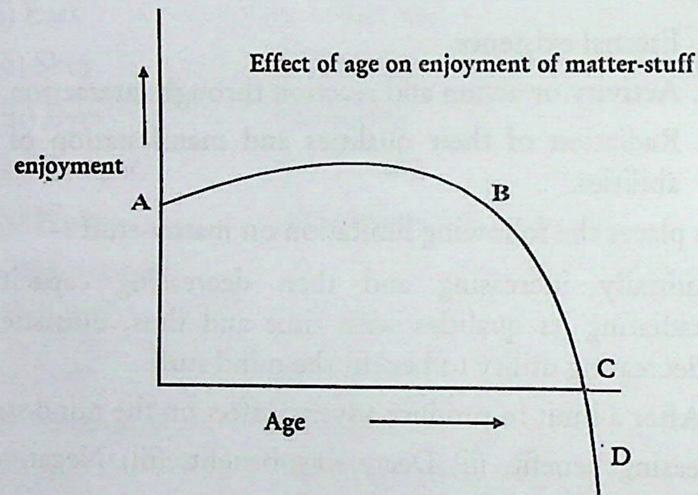


Initially, the use of the matter-stuff gives increasing utility to mind-stuff from point A to B. Thus, point B is the point of moderation where one should stop further use of that worldly object. Then the utility goes on decreasing from point B to C when it reaches zero point. Thus C is the point of complete denial or abstinence. From C onwards, the same matter-stuff produces increasingly adverse effect on the mind-stuff leading to its death. Thus, all matter-stuff comes to have a curvilinear character.

7. Maya places the following limitations on mind-stuff :-

a. Initially increasing and then decreasing capacity of absorbing and enjoying the pleasures of matter-stuff.

b. With advancing age, the capacity of mind-stuff to enjoy the matter-stuff is adversely affected.



Initially, the mind-stuff gets increasing satisfaction from point A to B. Thus, B is the point of moderation where any further use of the worldly object should be stopped. Then the satisfaction obtained goes on decreasing from B to C and reaches zero point. Thus, C is the point of complete denial on abstinence. From C onwards, the same mind-stuff suffers disadvantage from the same matter-stuff. Thus, all mind-stuff comes to have a curvilinear character.

8. Maya produces the following changes in mind-stuff during its interaction with mater stuff :

i. Birth

ii. Growth

iii. Sustenance

iv. Decay

v. Death

9. Maya endows the matter-stuff with the following three mental inclinations :-

a. Wisdom, goodness, happiness and harmony– Sattva Guna.

b. Sensuality, restlessness, passion and activity–Rajas Guna.

c. Negativity, withdrawal, laziness and inertia–Tamas Guna.

10. Maya operates in the world through Gunas. All phenomena in the world is because of the operation of the three Gunas. Maya infuses in the mind-stuff Egoism with an I-ness and the individual begins to consider himself as a separate entity from the rest of the world. This endows ego with self-love and selfishness. This egoism blinds man to all other considerations and he tends to monopolise the whole world for his own selfish aims, disregarding similar interests of others. This egoism prompts man to deviate from the path of justice, fair-play and Dharma. This also drives him away from God who symbolises Dharma, goodness, justice and fair-play. It is for this reason that society imposes various kinds of limitations and restrictions on man to curb this natural tendency of selfishness and violating the rights of others. This set of social prohibitions and prescriptions is sometimes called Dharma. The state codifies them as duties. Institutions enforce them in the name of discipline. This selfishness or egoism of man presents the most intricate problem for the society for striking a balance between freedom of the individual and welfare of the society.

11. Maya imposes on mind-stuff the limitations of time, space, age, capacity, ability, resources, energy etc. and makes him finite in every respect.

12. Physical World

This is the role played by Maya in phenomenal world. There is no mystery in the whole process. It has to be clearly understood, appreciated and kept in view while living and operating in this world. Unfortunately, this is not being done and that is the root

cause of suffering of man. The sane advice of all religions is as under:-

a. In view of the curvilinear character of matter-stuff, always enjoy the pleasures of the senses of this world with moderation.

b. With advancing age, particularly after 60 years of age, gradually withdraw from entanglement in the affairs of the world.

c. Exercise control on your sense and motor organs, mind, intellect and ego.

d. Cyclic change is the law of nature. Anticipate the change and adjust your life-style, habits and mental tendencies according to the changed circumstances.

e. Do not be misled by the deceptive appearance of worldly objects. Always understand their real nature and behave intelligently.

f. This world or its objects do not belong to you. You are just like a fellow traveller. So, enjoy your stay in this world but enjoy the pleasures of this would with moderation and detachment.

D. Meaning of Guna

1. All matter-stuff is infused with specific qualities. The elementary particles of matter-stuff are supposed to be of five categories each having its own qualities :-

Category of Elementary Particles of matter-stuff	Basic Quality of the Elementary Particles
a. Ether	Sound
b. Air	Sensation
c. Fire	Shape, colour
d. Water	Flavour, taste
e. Earth	Smell

2. Infused with cosmic energy and quality, the elementary particles acquire a force of their own which creates a "field" around

it. The area of the field depends upon the energy level and mass of the particle. It acquires the following operational pattern :–

i. Existence or harmony
ii. Vibration or activity.
iii. Radiation of its quality or rest.

3. Whatever comes within the range or the field of the elementary particle, it affects that entity accordingly.

4. When such particles come into contact with mind-stuff, they produce the following effects in the mind-stuff (Gita chapter XIV).

i. Harmony
ii. Activity
iii. Repose or rest

5. These three qualities of matter-stuff are known as the three Guans. They are termed as Sattva, Rajas and Tamas respectively. On account of contact of the matter-stuff with the mind-stuff, the mind-stuff also comes to absorb these three gunas and it is accordingly affected. These three gunas produce the following effects in the mind-stuff :–

i. Sattva Guna– Harmony, goodness, happiness, wisdom, lightness.
ii. Rajas Guna– Activity, restlessness, sensuality, passion.
iii. Tamas Guna– Rest, laziness, inertia, heaviness, ignorance, negativity.

As stated earlier, gunas are like energy packets pervaded with specific qualities. They inhere the particles of matter-stuff of which the objects of the world are made. From the objects made of matter-stuff, the gunas get transferred to living beings and become an inseparable part of the personality of the individuals.

E. Nature of Gunas

There is a mention of the three gunas in the Rigveda (Rig.I.164.2) where the three gunas are mentioned as three spokes of a wheel as common to the basic structure of individuals and objects of the universe. The three gunas have been exhaustively dealt within Sankhya Sutra where they are stated to be the very stuff of which this universe and all else has been made. When they are in a state of

equilibrium, there is no evolution or phenomenal process. Universe remains in a dormant state. As soon as there is a disequilibrium in the three gunas, universe becomes dynamic and evolution begins. Gunas are also mentioned in the Atharvaveda (X.8.43). Gunas are explicitly mentioned in Shvetashvatara Upanishad (V.7), [1] Ramayana, Mahabharat and Manusmriti. Chapter XIV, XVII and XVIII of the Gita deal with gunas in a very exhaustive manner.

There is no equivalent word in English language for the Vedic concept of Guna. It has no equivalent word in any other language too. Therefore, the following points about Gunas and their relation to man are to be adequately understood to appreciate their role in the development of human personality :

a. All the three gunas are present in all individuals but their proportion and intensity differ from person to person. Each guna can have three levels of intensity- dominant, moderate and low.

b. Broadly speaking, in an individual one of the three gunas dominates for most of the time. The other two gunas could be at moderate and low levels respectively. Their order in different persons can be as under and accordingly, they will have their nature of personality.

S.No.	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas	Nature of personality
1.	Dominant	Moderate	Low	Divine
2.	Dominant	Low	Moderate	Good but inactive
3.	Moderate	Dominant	Low	Active and Good
4.	Moderate	Low	Dominant	Lazy but not bad
5.	Low	Dominant	Moderate	Active but not good
6.	Low	Moderate	Dominant	Demonic

c.) However, at a particular point of time, the stable and normal order of gunas may get upset because the mind is so fickle. Thus, temporarily, a person may behave differently from his normal self.

1. गुणान्वयो यः फल कर्म कर्त्ता कृतस्य तस्यैव स चोपभोक्ता।
सविश्वरूपस्त्रिगुणस्त्रिवर्त्मा प्राणाधिपः संचरति स्वकर्मभिः॥ V.7. Shvetashvatara Up.

That is why the behaviour of a person always remains unpredictable. A saint at a particular moment may behave like a scoundrel and at times a scoundrel may behave like a saint. So, man has to be ever vigilant and keep his mind under his control.

d.) All the three gunas are useful and necessary. One cannot be active and cannot work for all the twenty four hours. Rest and repose are equally important. So a person has to adjust his life in such a way that equanimity, activity and repose— all the three may have their proper place in daily life. (i) A person normally needs nearly eight hours of rest and sleep when Tamas will prevail over Sattva and Rajas. (ii) He may need nearly ten hours for his vocational pursuit. During this period, he has to be active but at the same time duty- conscious and good. So, Rajas supported by Sattva should dominate during these ten hours. A person needs nearly four hours for his daily routine and odd jobs, when Rajas should dominate. Therefore, a person has always to be on guard that during working hours, he keeps his mind under his control and does not allow vicious mental tendencies of Tamoguna to overpower his Sattva guna traits. (iii) A man should devote two hours entirely to remembrance and worship of God, equanimity, altruistic pursuits and benevolent acts. During these two hours, one should think of God and His attributes— namely bliss, wisdom and love and create around himself an atmosphere surcharged with these attributes. In a way, one should live in the company of God. Also, one should remind himself of the commandments of God and introspect how far he is obeying those commandments.

e.) Rajas guna has a set of neutral traits namely, energy, passion, desires, hard work and heroism. These traits when associated with traits of Sattva guna namely— wisdom, self-restraint, altruism and positive outlook will result in bravery, adventure, discovery, invention, social sense, creativity, art, culture and supreme sacrifice. But when they get associated with traits of Tamas guna— vulgarity, stupidity, selfishness, etc. They will result in sensuality, craving, greed, hatred, anger, jealousy, cruelty, violence etc.

With increasing contact or use of the same objects of the world repeatedly, these three qualities further strengthen themselves in man proportionality and in due course of time manifest themselves as under :-

S.No.	Equanimity or Sattva Guna	Activity or Rajas Guna	Indolence or Tamas Guna
1.	Wisdom	Energy	Inaction
2.	Goodness	Craving	Dullness
3.	Duty consciousness	Passion	Indifference
4.	Self restraint	Hard work	Despondency
5.	Faith	Heroism	Vulgarity
6.	Positive outlook	Hyper- activity	Stupidity
7.	Altruism	-	-

These are the traits which manifest themselves in Man and reflect the nature of his personality.

F. Can the intensity of Gunas be improved?

Normally, every person has more or less a stable level of traits of the three gunas. The integrated level of the three gunas and the intensity level of the gunas have a normal stable level with some fluctuations from time to time. But this position can definitely be changed for the better. It is said that during waking hours, Sattva guna produces happiness, Rajas guna produces suffering and Tamas guna produces pain. Since the aim of every person is to have more and more happiness, it is desirable that the level of Sattva guna should be upgraded. One can improve the level and intensity of Sattva Guna and consequently improve his personality by taking the following steps :–

a. Make the physical environment as pure and pollution-free as possible.
b. Take balanced and nutritious diet.
c. Give up undesirable habits and inculcate desirable habits.
d. Keep company of saintly and good persons.
e. Read uplifting and good literature.
f. Practise the eight steps of yoga.
g. Have a positive attitude in life.
h. Develop virtuous mental tendencies and subdue vicious mental tendencies.

i. Perform ordained duties seriously.

Summary

Maya or Illusive Power of God influences the world in the following ways.

1. Control over particles of energy, matter and mind.
2. Enforcement of Cosmic Laws to energy, matter and mind.
3. Endows Matter-stuff as under :-

S.No.	Gross matter	Subtle Qualities	Gross Qualities
1	Ether	Porosity	Sound
2	Air	Mobility	Sensation
3	Fire	Luminosity	Colour, heat, shape
4	Water	Liquidity	Flavour
5	Earth	Solidity	Smell

4. Endows Mind-stuff as under :-

Sensory Organs	Abilities
1. Ears	Listening
2. Skin	Feeling
3. Eyes	Seeing
4. Tongue	Tasting
5. Nose	Smelling
Motor Organs	**Abilities**
1. Hands	Prehension
2. Feet	Mobility
3. Tongue	Speech
4. Genitals	Procreation
5. Anus	Excretion
Subtle Organs	**Abilities**
1. Mind	Desires
2. Intellect	Intellection
3. Ego	Volition
4. Unconscious	Feelings, emotions, mental tendencies

5. Intuition Revelations

5. Endows Matter and Mind with :
   a. Eternal Existence
   b. Interaction
   c. Change phenomena
   d. Mental Bondage
6. Matter-stuff has a curvilinear character.
7. Mind-stuff has a curvilinear capacity.
8. Mind-stuff has cyclic change.
9. Endows Matter-stuff and Mind-stuff with :
   a. Wisdom, goodness, happiness, equanimity or Sattva Guna
   b. Sensuality, restlessness, passion, activity or Rajas Guna
   c. Withdrawal, laziness, repose, inertia, negativity or Tamas Guna
10. Infuses ego with I-ness, Egoism, selfishness, self-love.
11. Imposes limitations of time, space, age, capacities, abilities, resources, energy, etc. on Mind-stuff.
12. The sane advice of Maya to Man in very clear words is as under :–

> Use the objects of this world with moderation and discretion so as to maintain a balance in the three inclinations of mind.

This advice of Maya should never be ignored by man. Indulgence in anything is bad– however attractive and pleasurable the thing may appear to be.

Questions

1. How do you know that there is balance in the three Gunas in your life?
2. What will you do to correct the imbalance in the three Gunas in you, if any?
3. State the position of the three Gunas in you as under
   a. Dominant Guna
   b. Moderate Guna
   c. Low Guna

V. MAN

A. Introduction

Man has been trying to understand himself and his surroundings since the dawn of his appearance on the planet earth. He has admirably succeeded in understanding the laws governing the natural phenomena around him. However, his understanding about HIMSELF is still partial and sketchy. Man can predict natural phenomena with astonishing accuracy. However, he cannot make any such prediction with precision about man or even about himself. Even the concept of man is not clear. Some of the important questions asked by man about himself are as under :

1. What is Man?
2. Why are men so different?
3. What is the true nature of MAN?
4. Why is man so unpredictable?
5. What is the purpose of existence of man?
6. How should man lead his life?
7. Where does man come from or go to?

Even today, there are no clear and final answers to these questions. Much has been written about man by saints, scientists, medical men, psychologists, philosophers and sociologists from their own point of view. There is broad agreement on his physiological aspect. There is some agreement about his psychological and sociological aspects. However, there is lot of difference about his spiritual aspect. Still, whatever is known is sufficiently significant and enlightening. It will be useful to have some idea about the various aspects of man on the basis of existing knowledge about Man.

B What is man?

This question has been discussed in a very interesting and illuminating dialogue in Chandogya Upanishad (VIII-VII-XII). At the end of the training, Rishi Prajapati, wanted his two disciples Indra and Virochan to explain to him, "What is Man"? The disciples could not explain well. Then Prajapati asked them to go to the river,

see themselves in the water and report back. Both the disciples went to the river nearby, saw their reflection in the water and reported back. Virochan said, "Sir, I saw my body in the water and I feel I am this body." Prajapati accepted his reply and told him that his education had been completed, he could go home and lead his life according to his conviction. So Virochan came home and considering his body as his SELF did everything to develop, decorate and please his body.

But Indra told his master that he could not agree with the views of Virochan because SELF is said to be immortal, while the body was perishable and not immortal. So, body could not be the Self. Prajapati was glad and said, "Mortal indeed is the body. It is taken over by death. But this body is the support of that bodiless, deathless Self.....Realise it as such." (VIII-ix, x). Thus, soul is considered as the real Self or real Man.

There is a better explanation of Self in Kath Upanishad through the simile of a "chariot." "Know this body as a chariot and your soul as the master of the chariot. Know your intellect or reason as the charioteer and your mind as the reins. Again, the wise thinkers call the senses as the horses and the objects of the senses as the paths for their movement and they call one's soul yoked with mind and the senses as the enjoyer."[1] (Kath.I.3.3,4) Here body, mind, senses and the soul, all are said to be the Self. So, there are these three broad answers given to the question "What is Man"?

a. The body is the man.
b. The Soul is the real man.
c. Body, mind, intellect, senses and the soul— all taken together constitute the Self or Man.

Most of the other opinions rotate around these three views. You may accept any or reject all the three and have your own opinion. There can be no final answer to this question.

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1. आत्मानं रथिं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव्रतु:।
बुद्धि तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च।।१.३.३ Kath Up.
इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयां स्तेषु गोचरान्।
आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्या हुर्मनीषिण:।।१.३.४ Kath Up.

C. Nature of man

Opinions widely differ regarding the real nature of man. The Vedic Rishis considered man as divine and the same as the Supreme Being Himself. As against this, Holy Bible considers man as a sinner. The Bible asserts that man is born in sin, lives in sin and dies in sin. "Therefore, just as through one man, sin entered the world and death through sin and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned." (Holy Bible – Romans.5.12)

Lord Buddha presented a rationalistic view and stated that man is born with divine as well as devilish mental tendencies and that he may assume any form in accordance with his enveloping environment. Vedic texts also echo a similar opinion when it is said that on the body-tree, reside two birds (Human mind and Divine mind) and therefore, man shapes his nature in accordance with the mind (human or divine) to which the Self attends. Islam considers Man as the best creation of God in the whole universe (Ashraful Mukhlukat). All these opinions about the nature of man have been beautifully described by the 17th century poet Alexander Pope in his "Essay on Man" where he says:

> Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
> The proper study of mankind is Man.
> Created half to rise and half to fall,
> Great Lord of all things, yet a prey to all.
> Sole judge of truth in endless errors hurled,
> The glory, jest and riddle of the world.

Modern psychologists have widely differed in their opinion about the nature of man. Freud considered man as a slave of his base nature of sexuality and he reduced man to the status of an animal. Almost during the same period, some psychologists differed from Freud and said that man is a prisoner of the "Collective Unconscious" and a slave of his organic nature. Sometime later, psychologists endowed man with an "Ego Ideal" struggling towards his "Self Actualisation". Around 1960, the psychologists came around the view that man is neither devilish nor divine but an organism endowed with certain traits and struggling with himself, as well as with his environment, to reach an ever-illusive equilibrium. Against this background about

the concept of man and his nature, let us have a comprehensive and integrated view about Man.

D. Aspects of the life of man

1. Broadly speaking, there are four distinct aspects of the life of man :

a. **Physical aspect** : This aspect relates to the gross physical body, physiological systems, natural growth, maintenance and development of the body, health, energy level etc.

b. **Psychological aspect** : It relates to the internal subtle body supposed to be consisting of sensory faculties, mind, intellect, ego, subconscious and the unconscious. The internal chattering, desires, cognitive process, decision making, volition, feelings, etc. are part of this aspect.

c. **Social aspect** : This aspect relates to social interaction, relationships, worldly affairs, social aspirations, earning and spending, joys and sorrows, success and failures in day-to-day life, self-esteem, will-power, etc.

d. **Spiritual aspect** : This aspect relates to the mystical divine element which prevents man from going astray and prompts him to follow the virtuous path leading to peace of mind, inner joy and salvation.

2. These aspects have distinct existence in real life. They are mental constructs created by psychologists, philosophers and sociologists just for a better comprehension of the complex nature of man. In reality, man is one entity. These are the main interests in the life of a man. But this concept is very significant in the following respects :

a. These aspects present a hierarchy for attention and care. The physical aspect must get priority over the other three aspects because the existence of the other three aspects depends upon the existence of the physical aspect. Next comes the psychological. If these two are healthy, only then man will be able to successfully face the social aspect. Spirituality flowers only when the first three are well cared for. Some saints plead that the spiritual aspect should be attended to first. If it is well attended, the others will take care of themselves.

However, a person has to stand on his own before he can think of his emancipation.

b. Secondly, all the four aspects are equally important in life. Neglect of any one or more of these will make life lop-sided and lead to disastrous results. Physical health, mental alertness, worldly success and peace of mind— *all the four are equally important and all the four must be adequately attended to for a happy life.*

c. Physical aspect and social aspect taken together form the outer self of man, while the psychological aspect and the spiritual aspect form the inner self of man. There has to be a consistency between the two. If the two are very much different, a person may have a double personality–always in conflict with each other leading to an artificial life, anxiety, worry and suffering. Man will profess something and practise something else. An integrated Self emerges only when there is correspondence between the inner self and the outer self.

3. These four aspects manifest themselves at various stages of life and participate in the play of life of man. They are characterised by some special features which should be understood to appreciate the unfolding of the inner life of man and his journey from birth to death. These special features of the four aspects are as under :

a. Organs, equipment, apparatus and structures. Each aspect has some special apparatus for operation.

b. Operational systems which function and play their role.

c. Natural urges which are innate and cannot be ignored, denied or wished away.

d. Acquired aspirations which man wants to attain in worldly life.

e. Motive forces which propel the four aspects to play their part in life.

f. The developmental stages through which each aspect can be expected to pass from stage to stage.

g. The factors which influence proper development of the four aspects. These factors are :

i) Hereditary

ii) Social

iii) Volitional.

It is necessary to explain these features and their implication in the life of man.

E. Organs and apparatus of man :

Man has a number of organs– some-gross and some-subtle which go to make up his structure. These organs of the four aspects are :

a. **Physical aspect** : Body has an orthopaedic structure in which the organs like brain, heart, lungs, stomach, liver, kidneys, intestines and other organs are set. Also there are sense organs and motor organs. These organs must be in their right form and good health.

b. **Psychological aspect** : Psychological apparatus has no gross organs. But on the basis of internal working, the body is supposed to have some subtle organs, which perform the following functions :

i) Perception, internal co-ordination and communication. A lot of silent chattering goes on inside the body by way of communication of messages from the sense organs to the brain and from the brain to the sense and motor organs. Attention of sense organs to worldly objects, their perception, transmission of sensations from the sense organs to the sensory centres in the brain and their co-ordination go on all the time. These and several other functions are performed by a subtle agency or organs working inside the body. That subtle agency has been given the name of 'mind.'

ii) The messages from the sense centres are supposed to be co-ordinated and transmitted to another subtle agency which performs such functions as cognition, comparison, analysis, synthesis, inference, reasoning, generalisation etc. Such an agency along with the mind is supposed to be located inside the central nervous system. This subtle agency is named 'intellect'.

iii) There is sane agency inside the body which directs the whole body and appears to give final commands for action

on the basis of some personal preferential frame of reference. This agency is named as 'Ego'.

iv) Man is supposed to have a number of potential mental tendencies which manifest themselves during interaction with other persons in the world. These mental tendencies are located in what is called 'Sub-conscious'. These potential mental tendencies in the sub-conscious come to the conscious level in response to some stimulus. This sub-conscious has been given the name of *Chitta* by Patanjali in his Yoga system.

v) Some psychologists like Freud presume the existence of another agency called the unconscious. It is supposed to be the repository of unfulfilled desires, repressed feelings and long forgotten painful events. They are said to have great energy and have a free play during dreams. They are also the cause of various defence mechanisms in times of difficulty or social adjustment. Some philosophers say that the *Sanskaras* or end-results of our actions in this life and also of previous lives are stored here. As and when there is a suitable occasion, they exert pressure and manifest to seek satisfaction.

These five entities– mind, intellect, ego, sub-conscious and the unconscious constitute the psychological apparatus which operate within the person and present the play of life.

c. **Social aspect** : Social aspect is not supposed to have any gross or subtle organ. However, the Swiss psychologist Jung has stated that every man is born with the traits of a homeo sapian and in the early years of his life imbibes the culture of his parents which he cannot shake off throughout his life. He calls it "Collective unconscious". This cultural content operates and influences the life of man all through. This social unconscious is supposed to consist of instincts and aspirations.

d. **Spiritual aspect** : Spiritual aspect is believed to be constituted with "Intuition" which receives knowledge from somewhere in the form of revelations without the intervention of sense organs or reasoning. It is stated in many scriptures that God resides in every individual in the form of "divine mind"

which saves man from the dangers of deviating from the path of virtue. The two birds sitting on the body–tree, referred to in the Vedas and Upanishads, point to this divine mind. In the Gita, Lord Krishna says, "I am the Self seated in the hearts of all creatures." (X.20)

This, then is the equipment of which human machine is structured with. It consists of the organs of the body, mind, intellect, ego, sub-conscious, unconscious, collective unconscious, intuition and the divine mind. Let us now see how this machine operates.

F. Operational systems of man :

The organs of man have been organised by nature into systems which perform various functions. These operative systems relating to the four aspects of man are :

a. Physical aspect : The operating systems of the physical aspect are :

i) **Physiological Systems :** Orthopaedic System, Respiratory System, Digestive System, Circulatory System, Excretory System, Reproductive System, Muscular System, Nervous System.

ii) **Elemental Systems :** It is said that Man is constituted with the five elements of Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space in the form of solidity, liquidity, luminosity, mobility and porosity. These five states of matter must be present in the body at all times within a particular range. Excess or deficiency in any element can pose a danger to his existence. This is ensured by the Homeostasis System operating in the body.

iii) Other systems like life system and energy system.

b. Psychological aspect : Corresponding to the five subtle organs of the psychological aspect of man are mind, intellect, ego, sub-conscious and un-conscious. There are four psychological operating systems :

i.) **Desire system :** It operates and processes the unlimited desires of man.

ii.) **Thought system :** It processes the messages received

through the sense organs or from the sub-conscious and arrives at suitable conclusions.

iii.) **Volitional system :** Through this system, decisions for action are arrived in accordance with the likes and dislikes of the individual.

iv.) **Memory system :** It stores all information and knowledge and retrieves it as and when required.

If there is difficulty in the operation of any system, there is the Cathartic system to balance the psychological aspect.

Cathartic system is an internal psychological system which automatically and unconsciously comes into operation whenever there is any mental problem. This system tries to solve the mental problem in an indirect manner by invoking such defence mechanisms as repression, regression, reaction, projection and fixation. On a higher level, such defence mechanisms take the form of displacement, identification, substitution and sublimation.

c. Social aspect : The following system operates in the social aspect:

Instincts : The sense organs namely eyes, ears, nose, tongue and touch impulsively move out and interact with other persons and objects. These are involuntary natural promptings or natural urges to action without conscious effort.

On interaction, there is entanglement in persons and objects of the world. From such interaction, normally the following three outcomes are experienced :

i.) The individual likes the person, place or object, enjoys the interaction and wants to continue the relationship. This results in attachment and love.

ii) The individual dislikes the person, place or object, and abhors the interaction and wants to discontinue the relationship. This results in repulsion and hate.

iii) The individual may not feel interested in the relationship and he wants to forget about it. It results in indifference and forgetting.

d. Spiritual aspect : With reference to spiritual aspect, the following three systems operate in the individual :

i.) Faith : It is the acceptance of a person or a statement without any specific reason— rather instinctively.

ii.) Empathy : Feeling one with the other person. A person is moved by the suffering of the other person and becomes keen to end that suffering.

iii.) Detachment : At times, the individual wants to be alone from everything in the world— all persons and objects and develops an aversion towards the world.

All these systems do not start operating from the time of birth. Systems of the physical aspect start operating immediately. Sometime later, the psychological systems begin their operations and then the social systems. The systems of spiritual aspect start operating quite late or may not start operating at all.

G. Natural urges of man :

There are some natural urges in man which manifest themselves at the appropriate time. Some of the more prominent natural urges relating to the four aspects are :

a. **Physical aspect** : Natural urges relating to physical aspect are :

i. Survival

ii. Development

iii. Activity

iv. Repose or rest.

These urges manifest themselves very early in life.

b. **Psychological aspect** : There are four natural urges relating to psychological aspect:

i.) Enjoyment of pleasure of the five senses, i.e. eyes, ears, nose, tongue and touch.

ii.) Egoism - selfishness or self-love.

iii.) Mental tendencies.

iv) Hope

Mental tendencies

The concept of Mental tendencies needs special explanation :

a. Western view

They are inner springs of behaviour located in the sub-conscious and unconscious. They are prompted either by the outside environment or by some thought or feeling inside man. They, then get activated and lead to some action. Normally, they remain in dormant state but can become active any time.

Freud was the first modern psychologist to probe into the inner springs of behaviour while treating his patients suffering from abnormal behaviour. He identified sexuality as the only mental tendency behind all behaviour. But later, psychologists did not agree with Freud. Carl Jung stated that sensation, feeling, intuition and thinking are the four mental functions behind all behaviour. Another psychologist Maslow talked about "Needs" as the springs of mental tendencies.

But it was the American psychologist Cattell who studied the problem in a systematic and scientific manner and identified large number of mental tendencies by studying the behaviour of people. Ultimately, he selected twelve basic mental tendencies. He called them traits. A trait is a mental structure. This inference has been drawn by him from observed behaviour of a large number of individuals. They account for regularity or constancy in behaviour.

These twelve traits represent two extreme points depending upon the intensity of the trait present in a person. These traits are :–

1. Outgoing or reserved
2. More intelligent or less intelligent
3. Stable or emotional
4. Assertive or humble
5. Sober or happy go-lucky
6. Conscientious or expedient
7. Venturesome or shy
8. Tough-minded or tender-minded
9. Trusting or suspicious
10. Imaginative or practical
11. Forthright or shrewd
12. Assurance– Inspiring or Guilt-proneness

The states of these twelve traits determine the nature and character of the person.

There are many opinions about the inner life of man by different western psychologists. But there is no unanimity and there are no means to test the validity or to prove the futility of any opinion. Therefore, it is for the individual to accept that view which appeals to him the most.

b. Buddha's Analysis

Lord Buddha had studied the mental tendencies minutely which can be grouped under three categories :

1. Virtuous (25)
2. Neutral (13)
3. Vicious (14)

Some of the more important of these mental tendencies are :-

Virtuous Mental Tendencies (25)	Neutral Mental Tendencies (13)	Vicious Mental Tendencies (14)
Compassion	Feelings	Ignorance
Self-esteem	Ideas	Distraction
Mindfulness	Sensations	Pride
Equanimity	Intellection	Jealousy
Social shame	Energy	Mental fire, Anger
Tranquillity	Grasping	Mental Trembling
Buoyancy	Concentration	Covetousness
Joy		Greed
Proficiency		Lust
Self restraint		Hatred

The roots of all the 52 mental tendencies are present in every person. But only those mental tendencies get strong which get favourable environment for frequent manifestation and expression. It is for man to have control over his vicious mental tendencies and strengthen his virtuous tendencies.

The neutral tendencies provide intensity to both the categories of mental tendencies- virtuous and vicious. Such combinations are

stated to be :-

When neutral and virtuous mental tendencies combine, they result in	When neutral and vicious mental tendencies combine, they result in
Discoveries	Lust
Inventions	Violence
Adventure	Cruelty
Bravery	Hatred
Sacrifice	Vulgarity
Social-service	Envy
Art	Revenge
Culture	Aggression
Heroism	Exploitation
Idealism	Despondency
Creativity	Conflicts

Buddha clearly stated that man must always be vigilant to overcome and control his vicious mental tendencies through the eight-fold path prescribed by him.

c. Vedic View

Vedic philosophers had approached the issue of mental tendencies in a slightly different way. They had stated that every person has three kinds of mental inclinations within himself :

i. Positive, constructive and altruistic mental tendencies. They result in goodness, wisdom, harmony and happiness. They called these tendencies Sattva Guna.

ii. Volitional, aspirational and energising mental tendencies. They result in passion, activity and buoyancy. They called these tendencies Rajas Guna.

iii. Negative, destructive and egoistic mental tendencies. They result in ignorance. laziness and vulgarity. They called these tendencies as Tamas Guna.

These three tendencies are present in all the persons but their intensity differs from person to person and even from time to time. One of these tendencies is normally predominant while the other two are at moderate and low levels respectively. Accordingly is the

nature and character of that person. An effort is to be made to maintain a balance among the three gunas with Sattva Guna at predominant level, Rajas Guna at moderate level and Tamas Guna at low level. This can be achieved through the practice of the eight steps of Patanjali Yoga Sutra.

c. Social aspect : Natural urges relating to social aspect are as under :

i.) Identity : Every person is unique in himself. He has some special characteristics which stand out and distinguish him from others. These characteristics manifest themselves in his day-to-day behaviour. Subsequently, he himself also becomes conscious of his identity and he strengthens them more and more. They constitute his character.

ii.) Assertion : An individual wants to lead his life in the way he likes. This urge becomes more prominent since the age of adolescence. Man does not want to be forced and dictated in his day-to-day life. If he cannot avoid it, he surely resents it.

iii.) Expression : An individual expresses his inner self through his lifestyle, behaviour, actions, utterances, writings and other artistic manifestations.

d. Spiritual aspect : This is the last aspect to manifest itself. Also, it may not manifest itself if the individual is too egoistic or too much involved in worldly affairs. However, natural urges relevant to spiritual aspect are :

i) Benefaction or doing good to others or helping others.

ii) Creating or producing pieces of art, literature, architecture or other manifestations which provide joy to him and to others.

iii) Seeking peace of mind.

H. Acquired aspirations of man

There are a number of aspirations acquired by man during the adolescent or early adulthood stages. Through his interaction with other persons, he learns what most persons aspire for. In due course of time, he himself acquires the same aspirations. These aspirations are :

a. **Physical aspect**

i. Health

ii. Presentable appearance.

b. **Psychological aspect**

i. Happiness

ii. Self-esteem

c. **Social aspect**

i. Wealth

ii. Name and fame

iii. Power and status

iv. Progeny

d. **Spiritual aspect**

i. Service

ii. Sacrifice

iii. Renunciation

These aspirations have ever receding higher and higher targets– always craving for more and more of these things while never reaching a satiety point. So, this becomes a life-long effort of man. Spiritual aspiration arise late in life– say in later adulthood or old age. Some may not have them at all.

There is nothing wrong in having such socially acquired aspirations. But the targets of these aspirations must be realistic and achievable. They may be reviewed and upgraded within reasonable limits from time to time. But it must be noted that craving for one or two aspirations alone will make life lop-sided and imbalanced. So, all the aspirations are desirable. An effort has to be made to maintain a balance in all the aspirations. Emphasis on some or a craving for some only, will lead to more harm than good. Need is welcome, greed is to be avoided and shunned under all circumstances.

I. Motive powers which prompt man into action

Although natural urges and acquired aspirations are adequate enough to prompt an individual into action in the world, yet there are some other factors, in the absence of which, it would perhaps not

be possible for an individual to undertake action. Such factors and forces are :

a. Physical aspect

i. Consciousness

ii. Energy

b. Psychological aspect

i. Desires

ii. Thoughts

iii. Feelings, emotions, sensations

iv. Imagination

v. Will-power

c. Social aspect

i. Self-esteem

ii. Inspiring social environment

iii. Recognition

iv. Appreciation

d. Spiritual aspect

i. Introspection

ii. Inspiration

iii. Revelations

The intensity of these factors differs from person to person. These factors are greatly influenced by health, education, self-effort, etc., Hence, the motivation to action also differs from person to person to a great extent. The achievements in life will naturally depend upon the high intensity of these factors. The spiritual aspect is dependent mostly on self-effort and a special bent of mind of the individual.

J. Developmental stages of the four aspects of man

a. Physical aspect : The growth of the physical aspect is chronologically determined :

i. Pre-natal	- 0	Birth
ii. Infancy	0 - 3	years
iii. Childhood	4 - 11	years

iv. Adolescence	12 - 18	years
v. Early adulthood	19 - 40	years
vi. Later adulthood	41 - 60	years
vii. Old age	61-	onwards.

The age indicated here is approximate. With extra effort, development may be accelerated. Also if proper care is not taken, even normal growth may be retarded. It is, therefore, incumbent on parents, teachers and the individual himself to take care of the physical development particularly, upto the adolescent stage. Any deficiency during this period cannot be made up adequately at a later stage. Since adolescence, it is the duty of an individual to look after his physical aspect himself.

b. Psychological Aspect

Development of psychological aspect is of the utmost importance. It is somewhat dependent on the physical aspect and is the mainstay of the social aspect. Unfortunately, the development of psychological aspect is neither automatic nor chronological. It requires great volitional effort otherwise the mind, intellect, ego and the sub-conscious remain under developed.

Medical scientists, educationists and psychologists have done a lot of work on the physiological, cognitive and affective processes relating to the psychological aspect. Neurological science has done lot of research on brain, its development and treatment of neurological disorders. The famous psychologist Jean Piaget carried out extensive research regarding the emotional and cognitive processes. In recent times, Dr. Bloom has rendered valuable service in unravelling the taxonomy of emotional (affective) and cognitive processes. However, not much has been done towards the development of mind, intellect, ego and sub-conscious as subtle organs of the psychological aspect.

But saints and yogis have paid due attention to this aspect. Patanjali, in particular, outlined detailed procedure for the development of sub-conscious or citta which is supposed to be the store house of all mental tendencies. His commentator, Vyas has mentioned five stages of development of psychological aspect. These stages are :

i. Stupid, sluggish and vicious. This is one extreme of the state of psychological aspect.

ii. Passionate, restless and agitated. When the mind leaves its sluggishness and becomes a bit active, it craves for pleasure of the senses and remains ever restless and hungry for more and more pleasure.

iii. Relaxed, active and duty conscious. When a person exercises control on his senses and leaves his viciousness, he feels relaxed, fulfils his ordained obligations and remains active.

iv. Concentrated, well balanced and virtuous. He does not run after worldly progress alone but aspires for spiritual pursuits also.

v. Restrained, altruistic and contented. He has full control over his senses, mind and egoistic tendency.

The way for such development is the path of Yoga through its eight steps.

About the development of intellect, Yoga Sutra mentions about two states (Yoga Sutra I.48)[1]. This is also mentioned in the Gita (II.41). These two states are :

i. Intellect which remains indecisive and vacillating.

ii. Intellect which is stable and directly reaches the essence of the subject. Such an intellect is called *Ritambhara Buddhi* (Yoga.I.48). *Sthit pragya* (Gita II-55-58, 61 also points to the same stage)

The path for the development of intellect is well explained in the Gita as well in the Yoga Sutra.

Ego, at its two extremes assumes the following two states :

i. Egoistic or self-centred where it wants everything for itself.

ii. Altruistic or socially oriented where it keeps into consideration the welfare of others as well.

These are the developmental stages of the psychological aspect of man. Such development does not take place as a matter of course or automatically, but man has to work hard for such development and

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1. ऋतम्भरा तत्र प्रज्ञा। Yogasutra I.48.

work throughout his life because the psychological aspect is subject to change from moment to moment. So, to remain on the path of development, one must remain ever vigilant and determined. The option is open to man.

c. Social aspect

Development of the social aspect takes place through the following stages :

i. Interaction with the social group.

ii. Intimate relationships with individuals.

iii. Cultivation of relationship in conformity with the culture of the group (A-cultivation).

iv. Integration with the cultural group.

Such development takes place to some extent through unavoidable social interaction since infancy. However, it is for the individual to establish harmonious relationship and further cultivate such relationship through his own efforts. If proper adjustment in relations does not take place, man remains alienated and feels isolated. Therefore, he must try his level best to develop his social aspect.

d. Spiritual aspect

It is difficult to say how spiritual aspect develops in an individual. Different saints have passed through their spiritual development through different chance events or circumstances. It has often happened through conscious effort. However, in most cases, the spiritual aspect has developed through the following stages :

i. Wonder about the world and its working.

ii. Curiosity about the world phenomena.

iii. Vision of Self

iv. Love for his fellow men

v. Vision of God

vi. Surrender to God

Ryuho Okawa, the great Japanese Guru has stated the following stages of spiritual development.[1]

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1. Ryuho Okawa– The laws of the Sun. Jaico Publishing House. Mumbai 2009, pages 16-17.

(i) Spirituality, (ii) Altruism, (iii) True knowledge, (iv) Compassion.

This does not happen in all cases and decidedly not at any particular age. In many cases, it does not happen at all. Also wealth, power, status, scholarship, wisdom, etc. have nothing to do with the development of spiritual aspect. It may be due to chance, grace of God or blessing of some saintly person or some mysterious event. Empathy, faith, benefaction, service and sacrifice have definitely something to do with this development of spiritual aspect. Such development is surely a blessing for the individual.

It has been stated above how the personality of an individual develops through time from an initially raw savage status to a divine person. Have a look at the drastic change.

a. Physical aspect

i. From a helpless infant to a healthy and confident adult.

b. Psychological aspect

i. From a sheepish, sluggish mind to a restrained and contented mind.

ii. From a passionate mind to a virtuous mind.

iii. From a vacillating intellect to a *Ritambhara* or penetrating intellect.

iv. From a self- centred ego to an altruistic ego.

c. Social aspect

i. From an interactive individual to an integrated social being.

d. Spiritual aspect

i. From a bewildered person to a perfect devotee.

K. Effect of age on the life of man

Age has a great influence on the four aspects of life of man, his characteristic nature, his energy level, his capacities and his life-style. Keeping these factors in view, the Vedic Rishies had divided the total period of 100 years of life into four parts called Ashramas. With slight adjustment, the four stages can be stated as under :

a. Student	0 - 25 years
b Householder	26-60 years

c. Social worker 61-75 years.

d. Retired 75 onwards

a. Student (0-25). This period is characterised by development and preparation for life The dominant activities during this period have to be :-

i. Development of potential abilities of physical and psychological aspect upto their optimum level.

ii. Inculcation of desirable habits through regulated and disciplined life.

iii. Development of virtuous mental tendencies through the practice of yoga.

iv. Acquisition of true knowledge.

v. Occupational preparation.

vi. Restrained life-style.

b. Householder (26-60) : This period is characterised by full participation in worldly life such as :

i. Raising a family

ii. Attainment of worldly aspirations of wealth, name, fame etc.

iii. Enjoyment of pleasures of the senses and other blessings of the world.

iv. Excellence in profession or occupation.

v. Observance of Dharma and performance of ordained duties.

vi. Life style characterised by hard work, moderation, balance and self-worth.

c. Social worker (61-75) : This period is characterised by gradual withdrawal from worldly entanglement to social service as under :

i. Increasing restraint on enjoyment of pleasure of the senses.

ii. Gradual withdrawal from occupational engagement to social service.

iii. Phasing out of family responsibilities to the next generation.

iv. Life-style characterised by equanimity, self restraint, compassion and selfless service.

d. Retired (75 onwards) : This period is characterised by complete withdrawal from social aspirations, devotion to altruistic

pursuits and creative activities, such as :-

i. Religious and spiritual pursuits

ii. Study of scriptures

iii. Social service and sacrifice for a good cause.

L. The Problem of aging

Normally, an individual leads a healthy life upto the age of 40 years. Then there are visible signs of old age e.g., greying of hair, weakening of eye-sight, declining energy level, problem of hearing, etc. As age advances, these problems aggravate and other problems crop up. Later, old age overpowers man with death staring in his face.

Old age and death are natural and inevitable events in life. But they need not be painful and torturous. There are definite causes for old age and one cannot escape ageing. Some of the causes are natural while others are incidental.

1. Natural causes. Natural causes of aging are –

a. An individual inherits a genome from his parents with 46 chromosomes and millions of genes. The genes which determine aging are also a part of the genome. Accordingly, aging starts at the appropriate time.

b. An individual has a particular level of life-force. With the passage of time and particularly after the age of 40 years, life-force gradually goes on becoming weaker and weaker leading to old age and death.

c. With advancing age, the proportion of collegian– a protein goes on increasing with the result that the flexibility of the body goes on decreasing and body becomes stiff. This affects movement of organs and old age starts.

d. After the age of forty years or so, the metabolic and nervous systems become weak. This affects the entire working of all the physiological systems. Gradually, the Pro-synthesis systems of protein become weaker and weaker leading to aging.

e. Protoplasm, the source of life in the DNA is composed of 23 elements. Some of these elements are extracted from the food, while others are extracted from the environment through breathing. With advancing age, the capacity of the

body to extract these elements from the environment goes on decreasing. A moment comes when it is not possible to do so at all. That moment becomes the moment of death.

2. Other causes of aging

However, there are other man-induced causes which accentuate the natural causes and lead to pre-mature aging and avoidable suffering. Many of these causes can be controlled by an individual through volitional effort. Some of the more important of such causes are :–

a. Unregulated and wayward life.

b. Fried, processed and spiced food.

c. Exciting and intoxicating drinks and drugs.

d. Undesirable habits.

e. Vicious mental tendencies.

f. Emotional outbursts and irritating temper.

g. Negative, destructive and harmful ideas, feelings and emotions.

h. Idleness, lack of purpose, self-pity and low self-esteem.

i. Anxiety, depression, false apprehensions.

j. Traumatic events, natural calamities and disappointments.

If an individual wants to live longer and live happily even in old age, he should observe the followings :–

a. Simple, graceful and active life.

b. Nutritious and balanced diet.

c. Moderation, temperance and restraint in enjoyment of pleasure of the senses.

d. Development of virtuous mental tendencies.

e. Inculcation of desirable habits.

f. Positive, constructive and beneficial ideas, feelings and emotions.

g. Realistic and objective view of life and the world.

h. Faith in God and Self.

i. Practice of Yoga.

j. Always to have some worthwhile purpose in life.

This is the way to long life and happy living.

M. Factors influencing development of man

Let us see what factors influence development of the personality of man.

Mainly there are three kinds of influences which help in the development of personality- hereditary, social and volitional. Let us analyse the more important factors relating to each category.

Hereditary Influences

The following hereditary factors affect the personality of the individual.

a. **Genome-** It is the complete set of chromosomes of an individual. Each chromosome has a set of genes which have a coding in the language of its own. The genes represent the inherited characters from the parents and even from ancestors. Most of the physiological characteristics, metabolic processes and operational efficiency of the body systems are determined from the genome.

b. **The psychological apparatus** including the mind, intellect, ego and the unconscious in an undeveloped form.

c. **The social unconscious** and the divine mind as components of the human race.

d. **Impressions of the pre-natal experiences** from the physical and emotional states of its mother. The foetus in the womb is sensitive to emotions and feelings of the mother. The story of Abhimanyu— learning the art of breaking the Chakra Vuyuh is very famous.

e. **Impressions of early childhood experiences** when his own stream of consciousness is not so developed and focussed. Most modern psychologists attach great importance to positive and healthy family atmosphere during the early childhood years.

All these factors greatly affect the physical and psychological aspects of man. To a great extent, the mould of his personality is fairly and firmly cast before he becomes aware of his identity as an independent and autonomous member of the society. He is made by his parents and other members of the family. It is on these

hereditary foundations that the super structure of his personality is raised by him and the society in later years. So, there is great importance of the parents and other members of the family. The proper upbringing of children is, therefore, considered as an ordained obligation of parents and they must take it up seriously. During the present times, the need for parental education has not yet been fully realised by the society and the State. Many of the later complications and distortions in personality development can easily be avoided by compulsory parental education and taking due care of fulfilment of parental obligations towards the child by the parents. It is a sacred duty of all adults.

N. Social influences

The social factors which greatly influence the personality development of an individual are :

a. **Physical environment.**

It should be pollution free with adequate components of a healthy environment.

b. **The nature, quantity and quality of diet and other intake.**

It has to be balanced and nutritious. Body is made up of food and other intake like water, air, etc. It must contain necessary quantities of protein, fat, carbohydrates, minerals, vitamins etc. in right proportion. The Gita lays great stress on Sattvic food. (XVII.8) Such food is good for health, energy and longevity.

c. **Inculcation of desirable habits.**

Habits are normally from childhood and early adolescence under the supervision and guidance of parents, teachers and the peer groups. Some of the more important of such desirable habits are :–

i. Living habits

- Cleanliness.
- Care of health.
- Observance of daily routine.
- Orderliness of belongings.

ii. Work habits

- Observance of work schedule.

- Avoidance of waste.
- Reasonable efficiency level in performance of duties.
- Mutual co-operation and help.

iii. Social habits

- Punctuality.
- Courteous behaviour.
- Observance of rules of the concerned group and place.
- Respecting the opinion and rights of others.
- Non-interference in the affairs of others.

iv. Civic habits

- Taking care of public property.
- Respect for law.
- Respect for authorities established by law.
- Non-exploitation of the weak and the helpless.
- Helping the needy.

If such habits are not learnt in childhood, later on, it is very difficult to learn them. Also, the wrong habits get so ingrained in the person that later on it is very difficult to uproot them and replace such wrong habits by desirable habits.

d. Social environment.

It is created by the members of the family, peer group and the significant others. The nature, temperament and behaviour of these persons has great influence on the development of the personality of an individual. Therein lies the importance of good company.

e. Education.

School education is a special process of development of personality organised by the State and society. It normally takes ten to fifteen years. This has the greatest impact on the individual as it extends to the entire childhood and adolescent stages of life. They are the most sensitive and impressionable years in the life of a person. Education must cater to all aspects of life and ensure a balanced development of personality, otherwise the personality will remain lop-sided.

f. Policies and style of governance of the State.

The welfare-states today have very wide functions to perform and look after the welfare of the society as well as the individuals. The policies and style of governance of the government which represents the State, have a great influence in moulding the habits and behaviour of the individuals. The law and order enforcing agencies, the judiciary and the disciplinary authorities of the State greatly influence the moral behaviour. In view of the democratic traditions and the adult franchise, the responsibilities of voters have greatly increased. The right to vote must be exercised carefully and intelligently so that the persons who are given the responsibility of governance are really competent, sincere, honest and altruistic. This is all the more relevant in the case of our country where the right political culture has not been evolved as yet and an average citizen has been greatly disillusioned by the performance of the various governments since independence.

g. Chance events.

Last of all, there are some chance events which change the entire course of life of an individual. Some accident, family tragedy, windfall gain or some such event becomes so important that its effect lingers on and significantly influences behaviour. History is replete with such instances in the life of many great men.

These social influences shape the life of an individual. If a person is lucky to have all these factors in his favour, his personality will naturally flower in the right direction and he will be a healthy, intelligent, successful, moral and respectable person. But every person is not so lucky. Normally, some factor or the other remains weak, and it adversely affects development. Decidedly, it is a set-back and a person suffers for no fault of his own. But this is life and only a few may be really blessed by God.

However, this should not depress a person. There is always a hope for a brighter future. One may be poor today, but he need not remain poor forever. One may be suffering from some disease now, but he need not remain ill forever. Man must try to improve himself to the best of his capacity and upto the last breath of his life. God has bestowed on everyone a great potential for development and improvement. He has blessed everybody with will-power and

volitional freedom. Man has to make use of all these and try to improve himself.

O. Volitional influences

Broadly speaking, upto the age of fourteen years, it is the duty of the parents, members of the family and the teachers to advise, guide, help, supervise and discipline the child towards his development. The child is expected to obey and co-operate with them in their effort. However, after the age of fourteen, gradually he has to take over this responsibility from them. As he starts asserting his authority, he must also simultaneously assume the responsibility for his development. He should take the following steps for the development of the four aspects of his personality.

(a) Physical aspect

i. Physical environment. A man should live in pollution-free environment. Or else, whatever be the circumstances imposed on him, he should try to make the best of the bad situation. He should keep the surroundings clean, avoid pollution and try to reduce it as much as possible. Cleanliness is surely next to godliness.

ii. Balanced and nutritious diet. He should take balanced and nutritious diet and should not be a slave to his palate. If some food items do not suit his metabolism, he must avoid them. It is not so much a matter of money to ensure a balanced and nutritious intake as a matter of caution and good sense in selecting the items of food. Nature has ensured that most of such items are in abundance and within the reach of all. It is for man to be cautious and careful.

iii. Hard work. An individual must work hard. He should have sufficient energy and use it for performing his duties in the proper manner. He should not be overtaken by laziness, lethargy or carelessness in doing his work.

iv. Physical exercise. It is only through exercising that development takes place. Therefore, he should find out what sort of physical exercise will suit his age and circumstances. Then he should prepare a regular schedule and observe it seriously.

v. Desirable habits. Strengthening further the desirable habits stated in the previous section and getting rid of undesirable habits is a lifelong effort. It benefits and pays back abundantly.

b. Psychological aspect.

The following efforts should be made :

i. **Constant awareness of thoughts, feelings, words and actions** to ensure that negativity does not enter one's life. Mind is very fickle and subject to all kinds of temptations and weaknesses. So, it has to be watched over every moment to save later difficulties.

ii. **Introspection.** One should find some time to sit calmly, reflect back and review the events of the previous day, note the positive and negative points and draw appropriate lessons for guidance in future. This occasion may also be utilised to take necessary decisions regarding the activities for the ensuing day.

iii. **Acquisition of true knowledge.** This has become important because of the ever widening horizons of knowledge. If knowledge is power, one must acquire this power from the latest and the most authentic sources so that one is not misled into avoidable difficulties. Do not consult doubtful and unreliable sources or biased and prejudiced persons, least of all, do not go by rumours or opinions of mischief mongers

iv. **Practice of Yoga.** This is the most important step for the development and purification of the psychological aspect. Make a resolve everyday that "I shall no longer remain tense or worried. The first two steps of Raja Yoga. Yama and Niyams will clean you of all negativity and help you to have a positive outlook in life. This is winning half the battle and a royal road to end suffering. Asan, Pranayama and Dhyan will do the other half to make you happy.

c. Social aspect.

The following steps should be taken to develop the social aspect :

i. **Good company.** Whenever two entities come within the range of interaction, there is radiation of qualities by both. Naturally, during interaction, there is give and take and a tendency towards regression and a movement towards the position of the other. This is the law of nature. So, for self-

improvement, one should keep company with those who are superior, more virtuous, more noble and more godly so that during interaction, one is benefited from the company of such persons.. While interacting with persons who are inferior, one has to be on his guard to ward off any adverse influence through his volition and will-power.

ii. **Sincere and honest relationship.** During all interactions, one's relationship should be based on honesty, sincerity and mutual welfare. Patanjali has laid down a golden rule for all relationships, which could be followed with great advantage (Yoga Sutra (1.33))[1].

- Cultivate friendliness with those who are happy and prosperous.
- Have compassion for those who are suffering and are in pain.
- Show happiness towards those who are virtuous and altruistic.
- Be indifferent towards those who are vicious and wicked.

iii. **Performance of ordained duties towards all.** One should remain duty-conscious and perform his ordained duties towards all with sincerity and to the best of one's capacity. Neglect of duty is not only a social crime but also a moral sin.

iv. **Moderation in the enjoyment of pleasure of the senses.** Pleasure with passion and craving leads to suffering. Pleasure with moderation and restraint leads to happiness. Pleasure of senses from worldly objects observes a curvilinear tendency. It benefits the body and mind upto a limit. Beyond that point, pleasure becomes a source of pain. Therefore, be vigilant and never cross the limit. Too much of everything, however good it may be, is harmful. This is just an application of the Law of Diminishing Utility.

v. **Maintain balance in all the four aspects of life.** All the four aspects of life are equally important. Therefore, physical,

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1. Yoga Sutra, 1.33.

psychological, social and spiritual aspects should be paid due attention. It is totality of happiness in all the four aspects which gives true happiness. Neglect of any aspect will negate the happiness of other aspects. This is an extension of the Law of Equi-marginal Utility of Economics.

d. Spiritual aspect

This aspect normally remains unattended and hence undeveloped. Its development is not natural and automatic. It requires special attention and special effort. But this aspect is equally important and it provides a joy and satisfaction of its own which is different from sensual pleasure, freedom from anxiety and worldly success. It fills an inner vacuum, gives an inner joy and brings a lasting happiness. The following steps can be taken for development of the spiritual aspect.

i. **A simple life-style suited to one's social status.** Your life-style is a mirror of your inner self. It need not be glamorous and ostentatious. You should have a life-style as of others of your status — may be slightly better. By all means, have all items of necessity and comfort, keeping in view your ordained duties. But it should not be based on envy, vanity or comparison. It should not be to impress others or to belittle others. It should be graceful, dignified and tasteful.

ii. **Disciplined and regulated life.** One must have a schedule of work, keeping in view the duties to be performed. The schedule must be observed faithfully. There should be no room for laziness, mood, irresponsibility, neglect of duty or disregard for the convenience of others.

iii. **Study of scriptures and good literature.** Live in the company of the great men through the study of their classic writings. That is very uplifting and inspiring towards a good life.

iv. **Social service and sacrifice for a good cause.**

v. **Faith and Prayer.** Prayer is repetition of a good resolve. It gives an opportunity to introspect and move towards self-improvement. "Many things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." (Tennyson: Passing of Arthur).

Thus, an individual can ensure his development through his own efforts and make up for the deficiencies on the part of his parents, teachers and the society.

P. Indicators of improvement of the Self

It is the duty of every individual to improve himself upto the last breath of his life. There are definite indicators of such improvement. Some of the more improvement indicators of improvement relating to various aspect of life of man are :

a. Physical aspect

i. Normalcy in appetite, breathing, bowels and sleep.

ii. Health of the body and its organs.

iii. Operational efficiency level of the body systems.

iv. Energy level.

v. Immunity from environmental infection.

b. Psychological aspect

i. Moderation in enjoyment of pleasures of the senses.

ii. Normalcy in expression of emotions.

iii. Increase in span of concentration of mind.

iv. Improvement in the level of visualisation and conceptualisation.

v. Regularity and discipline in day-to-day life.

vi. Level of happiness.

c. Social aspect.

i. Harmony in social relationship.

ii. Attainment of social aspirations of wealth, status, name, fame, etc.

iii. Progress of family members in their life.

iv. Tolerance towards persons of different cultures, ideology, religion, region, caste, race, sect, etc.

v. Image in society.

d. Spiritual aspect.

i. Percentage of income given in charity.

ii. Regularity and satisfaction in worship, Dhyan etc.

iii. Selfless service of fellow-men.

iv. Moderation in life-style.

v. Peace of mind.

Progress towards one or more of the four aspects of life will mean improvement of the Self and moving away from these indicators will mean deterioration of the Self. It is never too late to improve oneself. Right volitional efforts as stated above will definitely lead to improvement of the Self, an end of suffering and attainment of happiness.

Q. Distortions in development and their correction

Some distortions in the development of personality are bound to be there because inspite of the most favourable circumstances, sometimes some lapses occur either on the part of parents or teachers or the individual himself. Due to such distortions, the individual suffers. This suffering may be physical, psychological or social. It may be mild or serious. But whatever it is, it should not be tolerated and every effort should be made to get rid of the distortion at the earliest and be free from suffering.

One must resolve to do so. Neglect in this respect amounts to failing to do one's duty. In such circumstances, proceed as under :

a. Remember the message of the Gita as given in Chapter VI.5 that **man is his own best friend and man is his own worst enemy**. So, be your best friend and do your best to get rid of the suffering. If you do not do so, who else will do that.

b. Sit calmly and meditate on the problem. Identify your strong points which uplift you and also identify your one or two weak points which are supposed to be the cause of suffering.

c. Check from the factors relating to development of personality stated above and identify which steps can help in the present situation. Note down those factors and the steps.

d. Prepare a time bound schedule of actions which need to be taken to correct the distortions and get rid of suffering.

e. Take the help of knowledgeable persons, scriptures and most of all God to help you in your efforts.

f. Start implementing your programme with conviction and

courage.

g. Periodically, review the situation and make modifications as necessary.

h. Continue till you succeed.

R. Limitations of man

In your efforts, you may succeed fully or partially. But you will definitely be able to bring about improvement in your life. Remember that you have so many limitations imposed on you :–

a. Time, money and other resources at your disposal are limited and you have to manage everything within those resources.

b. You have family responsibilities and cultural traditions which cannot be ignored. Society and the State have imposed so many restrictions on you which you cannot disregard.

c. As against this, man has natural urges, unlimited desires, unlimited social aspiration, an inflated ego, heavy unconscious and unlimited options between equally attractive choices.

But still you have to manage. There is no other option.

S. Dilemma of man

The dilemma in the life of man is, "How to go on in life in view of his many limitations and his very high aspirations". Aspirations are the challenges and the limitations are the difficulties in life. This is the play of life and this play has to go on. There is no escape. Under such circumstances, it is the message of the Gita which can really help. So, understand that message and succeed in life.

T. Aims of life of man

The most intriguing question in life is, "What is the aim of human life?" "Why have we come in this world?" "If God has sent us, what is His expectation from us?" "If we are a victim in the inevitable cycle of transmigration, what is our role during our present sojourn?" Such questions have been asked by man since the beginning of life and are being asked even today. Not that these questions have not been answered. They have been answered by many philosophers and saints in their own way, on the basis of their life-experiences.

Let us have a look at the answers given to these questions by different authorities :

a. The aim of life of man is to eat, drink and be merry.

b. The aim of human life is to live well. What is well lived life is explained by the culture of the person concerned.

c. The aim of life of man is to be successful in the world.

d. The aim of life of man is to lead a peaceful life with dedication and love for all.

e. The aim of life of man is to be free from suffering and be happy.

f. The aim of life of man is to unite with the Supreme Being.

g. There are four aims of human existence (a) Righteousness (Dharma), Wealth (Artha), Pleasure of senses (Kaam) and Salvation (Moksha).

h. The aim of life of man is to ensure the welfare of all and happiness of all-Bahujan Hitaye, Bahujan Sukhaye.

All these aims appear to be correct, but all of them are vague, incomplete and unconvincing. They do not clearly chart out the line of action for man. Also they do not give adequate justification for their pursuit. The Gita offers a few suggestions :

a. Nishkam karma or detached action.

b. Performance of ordained obligations.

c. Do what the wise elders have prescribed.

d. Follow your inner voice.

e. Do what you feel.

But all these things do not mean the same. Also, out of these, which one is the best course has not been indicated. Also, what is the most appropriate course for you?

In a way, each aspect of human life has its own distinct aim because each aspect is equally important, and a balance among the four aspects must be maintained. Only then an individual will be happy and contented.

Aims of human life corresponding to the four aspects of life of man could be as under :

a. Maintenance and development of the physical aspect for the satisfaction of the natural urges.
b. Development and control of the psychological aspect through yoga.
c. Attainment of social aspirations.
d. Heading towards spiritual emancipation.

All the four aims must be seriously pursued through out life. Neglect of any one or more will lead to suffering and negation of human existence. Only the emphasis may change from time to time. It is for the individual to decide what and what not should be done to achieve these aims of life.

U. Life after death

a. Vedic View

In Kathopanishad, NACHIKETA asked this question from Yama, "Whether the soul continues to exist after death. Some say, it exists and others says that it does not exist. Tell me what is the truth." (Kath.I.1.20)[1]. This question agitates the mind of many even today. This question has also been discussed in Chapter VIII of the Gita. According to the Gita and most Vedic scriptures, the soul of man can pass through any of the following states after death :

i. It may merge with the Supreme Being since it had fully purified itself from all afflictions.
ii. It goes to heaven, enjoys itself the comforts of heaven on the basis of its virtuous deeds. On the expiry of its corresponding term, the soul returns to this world and abides in some other living being.
iii. It directly transmigrates to some other body in its round of endless journey of life-death-life.

b. View of Lord Buddha

This question was put to Lord Buddha as well. Buddha did not

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1. येयं प्रेते विचिकित्सा मनुष्येऽस्तीत्येके नायमस्तीति चैके।
एतद्विद्या मनुशिष्ट स्त्वयाहं वराणामेषः वरस्तृतीयः॥ १.२०, Kath. Up.

believe in God and Soul. So, he refuted the opinion of Vedic scriptures. But he believed in transmigration (पुनर्जन्म). His reply is very interesting. It is somewhat :

Man has the following constituents :

i. The physical body : It is constituted by the physical equipment. It lives and grows on food. On death, it gets reduced to those very elements of which food is made.

ii. The subtle body : It is constituted by the mind, intellect, ego and the unconscious. It is inherited from the end results of actions of previous lives. It feeds on desires, thoughts, feelings, emotions, sensations, memory and imagination. It is the real 'I' of man. This 'I' is eternal and does not die at the time of death. It lives on through transmigration. This may be considered as the seed of life or elementary particle with potential to become life again given an appropriate environment. It is subtle, immortal, endowed with energy but devoid of consciousness. It is the 'Karma' of man in a dormant state.

iii. Life-force : An infant absorbs this life-force from the enveloping ocean of life all around. At the time of death, it separates from the physical body and the subtle body and merges in the ocean of life-force all around.

Thus, Buddha believed in 'Karma' transmigrating from one life to another.

c. Modern view

During recent times, the following writers have presented incontrovertible evidence in favour of transmigration :

Swami Abhedanand – Life Beyond Death.

Joe Fisher – The Case for Incarnation.

Goel and Wilton – Life Between Life.

Stevenson – Twenty Cases Suggestive of Re-incarnation.

Perhaps the best book of the subject is "The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying" by Somgyal Rinpoche. Very recently, doctors, psychologists and scientists have shown some interest in the subject. Dr. Raymond A. Moody had published a book 'Life After Life', based on his experiments on persons who had been declared

clinically dead and who later revived to life. He had recorded their statements describing what happened in between. These experiences are called "Near Death Experiences." On the basis of present knowledge, beliefs and scanty evidence, it can be said that death is not the end of life. It is only an interval between one life and another life.

One of the main features of the "Near-Death-Experience" is the impression of moving at terrible speed and feeling weightless through a black space- a total peaceful wonderful blackness and down a long dark tunnel. Further research on this subject is still going on.

What are its implications in practical life? This may be stated as under :

"At the start of your life, you had been entrusted with a "Subtle Body" constituted with mind, intellect, ego and unconscious filled with some ideas, feelings, emotions and desires and afflicted with a number of mental tendencies of different forms and intensity – some virtuous, some vicious and some neutral. That was your starting capital at the beginning of your present life. During your life-time, you have added to this your own contribution through your life and living resulting in modifications in the originally inherited "Subtle Body". At the time of death, you are expected to return back this "Subtle Body."

It will be greatly appreciated if you return a "Subtle Body" of a much better quality. You will be leaving behind you a better and a happier world with a more virtuous "Subtle Body." That will be your "Incognito Donation" to humanity.

V. Nature of Man

After dealing with almost all aspects of man, it will be useful to consider again the question of nature of man and his Happiness and Suffering. Is it in his nature to be happy or is it in his nature to suffer? Why some men are happy while others are suffering? Let us have a look at the inherent nature of man and then see how man can be happy overriding his nature.

Nature of man is very complex. It has a number of plus points in his nature which give him a great advantage. On the other hand, he

has a number of minus points in his nature which place him at a great disadvantage. Let us have a look at these points.

1. Plus points of man

a. Man is born with a number of organs and a number of internal operating systems. At the time of birth, such capacities are dormant. But they have great scope for development. These organs are– sense organs, motor organs, mind, intellect, ego, unconscious, intuition, etc. Similarly, there are physiological, psychological, social and spiritual operating systems. If man develops them to their optimum extent at the right age, he will be happy. If he does not develop these potentialities, obviously, he will suffer in life.

b. Roots of virtuous mental tendencies

Man has roots of virtuous mental tendencies at birth such as wisdom, love, mindfulness, equanimity, etc. He also has the qualities of faith, good feelings, good emotions, concentration, etc. If he develops these mental tendencies, he will be happy. If these mental tendencies remain dormant or under-developed, he will suffer.

c. Volition and freewill

Man has a free-will to choose between alternative options. An animal operates on the basis of its natural instincts only. It knows no options. But a man is endowed with reason, memory and imagination. He can think of a number of alternative options in any situation. Also, he has full freedom to choose out of these options. If he uses his free-will intelligently, he will be happy. If he uses his volition, on the basis of instincts alone like an animal, he will suffer.

2. Minus points of man.

a. Ignorance

At the time of birth, man has only a small stock of core knowledge which enables him to meet his natural urges and survive. Otherwise, he is completely helpless and ignorant of the enveloping world. It is for him to get rid of his ignorance and acquire true knowledge. He must understand God, universe, man and society– their nature and their relation to man. Only then, he will be able to interact with them to his advantage. If he does so at the proper stage of his life, he will be happy. Or else, he will remain ignorant and suffer.

b. Infatuation or Passion

Man has a tendency to get attached to some persons, places, objects, ideas, emotions and to develop a passion for them. This blinds him to their reality and he develops a weakness for them and crosses the limits of reason. This takes the form of craving. He craves for more and more of the same. This is particularly so in getting enjoyment of pleasure of the senses. The mind is never satisfied and blindly runs after such pleasures. This leads him to suffering. Therefore, it is necessary for man to exercise control on his mind and observe moderation while coming into contact with worldly objects. Such moderation and control on mind leads to happiness.

c. Roots of vicious mental tendencies.

Man is born with roots of a number of vicious mental tendencies such as greed, lust jealousy, hatred, pride, etc. But they are dormant. Man should not allow these vicious mental tendencies to develop. He must keep them subdued through the practice of yoga. Only then, he will be happy. If these tendencies find occasions to manifest and develop through his negligence, man is sure to suffer.

Such tendencies are of a negative nature and give rise to negative thoughts, feelings, emotions, utterances and actions. They naturally lead to suffering.

d. Indolence or laziness

Activity is in the nature of man but so also is indolence. Such indolence may be physical, when the body may be disinclined to exert or it may be mental when the mind may refuse any mental exercise. Such indolence leads to inaction and even non-performance of ordained duties. Naturally, such an attitude leads to suffering. Mind and body both must remain alert and active and under control. That alone will lead to happiness.

e. Desire for Immortality

Man is mortal but it is in the nature of man to forget about death and make such long term plans of life, as if he is to live forever. This prompts man to indulge in undesirable practices, anti-social activities and vicious mental tendencies. This leads to suffering. Yudhishthira called this attitude of man as the greatest wonder of the world. If

man always remembers that he is only a traveller in this world with a definite period of stay, he will behave in a more humane manner and will attain happiness.

f. Egoism, vanity, jealousy

Self-love and selfishness are ingrained in the nature of man. Sometimes, they overpower him, particularly when he has abundant resources, high ambitions and strong will-power due to continued success in life. If, at such a moment, some vicious tendencies grip his mind, he looses his mental balance and is swayed by egoism, vanity and jealousy. This may trigger negative emotions like anger, hatred, violence and even crime.

g. Fickleness of mind

The greatest problem of man is the fickleness of his mind. Mind is very powerful, very turbulent and the most unpredictable. So many natural urges, worldly aspirations and personal motives are simultaneously operating to sway the mind that it is almost impossible to predict what direction the mind will take unless the mind is well disciplined and under control. An undisciplined and wayward mind is the greatest enemy of man and leads man to untold suffering while a restrained and disciplined mind is his greatest friend and leads to happiness.

Thus, man has a dual nature- divine as well as demonic, with roots of both- happiness and suffering. It is between these two extreme points that the inherent nature of an individual operates at a particular time. This is his real nature which he must know. He must know and understand his inherent nature. If he does that and strengthens his virtuous roots and other plus points and is careful about his minus points, he becomes his own best friend and attains happiness. On the other hand, if he does not strengthen his plus points and allows his minus points to overwhelm him, he becomes his own worst enemy and suffers.

It is for man himself to be the master of his destiny.

Created half to rise and half to fall,
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all.

W. Rise and fall of man

If man is born to rise and fall, let us consider who will rise and

who will fall? What leads to success and what leads to failure? What leads to happiness and what leads to suffering?

Man is triggered into action by desires. Such desires arise in the mind of man because of natural urges, social aspirations, some stimulus inside the body or in the outside enveloping environment. These desires are stirred and intensified by the motive forces operating inside the body and in the environment. These motive forces energize and activate the sense organs, motor organs and other operating systems inside man. So, impelled from all sides, man engages into action and entangles himself in worldly affairs. This is what we experience every day in life.

Results of an action culminates in three forms– success, partial success or failure. Let us see the consequential reactions in case of success.

a) Success implies satisfaction, joy and enjoyment of sensory or mental pleasure. The natural tendency of human mind is to seek more and more of such pleasure. But, immediate repetition of the same action will not be a wise step. The relevant point to consider is whether to repeat the action or not to repeat the action. The golden rule is as under :–

Objects of the world and the capacity of man to extract pleasure from objects of the world have a curvilinear nature and after a point, they lead to adverse results and harm the individual. This point is known as the point of moderation. If this point of moderation has been reached, the action should not be repeated. This would be a wise decision leading to happiness of man and repetition of the action will lead to opposite results. But this requires control of man on his mind. So, a wise man must train his mind and bring it under his control so that he takes wise decisions, succeeds, and progresses in life.

In case, the point of moderation has not been reached, the action may be repeated at an appropriate time, if so desired.

b) In case of partial success or failure, there is likely to be disappointment, anxiety and frustration. Again, the question arises whether to make a second attempt or not. The decision should not be a split-second decision and action should not be a reflex action. That will again lead to partial success or failure and hence more of suffering.

c) Here, there is an important point for an intelligent and judicious decision. The relevant point for consideration at this point is to identify the reasons for partial success or failure. Such reasons could be one or more of the following :-

i. Ignorance of the situation.
ii. Inadequate or wrong knowledge about the situation.
iii. Lack of adequate competence for excellence in performance.
iv. Delusion or too much craving for the expected pleasure or intense emotional involvement.
v. Egoism, vanity, jealousy, etc.
vi. Inadequate energy level for action.
vii. Weak will-power
viii. Lack of faith in the righteousness of the action.

Before taking any decision to repeat the action or not, it is prudent to identify the reasons for failure and make up the deficiency through appropriate corrective actions in the situation. When the deficiency has been reasonably made up, action may be repeated. That will lead to success, happiness and rise of man. Opposite decision and action will lead to opposite results. But this again requires control of man on his mind, a sharp intellect and a pure spirit. So, a wise man must train his mind and develop all his potentials to the optimum. Only then, man will be in a position to arrive at intelligent decisions, right actions, success, happiness and rise in life.

X. Conclusion

A comprehensive pen picture of man in all its aspects has been presented in this chapter. A bird-eye view of the same is given in the enclosed chart. Study this chart and then assess your own personality, its present status, its strengths, its weaknesses and the direction in which corrective action is required for improvement. The above description explains what most men are. On the basis of the same, now try to know what type of person you are. Then you will come to know your own Self. Remember that your aim is to get rid of suffering, attain happiness and achieve the aims of human life.

Also, see whether you are observing the laws of happy living, e.g. moderation in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures, balance in the four aspects of your life, performance of your duties, practising the eight steps of yoga, inculcating virtuous mental tendencies, developing desirable habits, etc. It will be very illuminating and rewarding to have such an assessment done and take necessary steps for your self-improvement.

Summary

1. Man is a very complex living organism and difficult to understand. However, every person should try to know and understand himself, particularly his inner self.

2. Man has four distinct aspects of his life– physical, psychological, social and spiritual. All the four aspects are equally important. Happiness of man depends upon a balanced and integrated development of all the four aspects of life. Neglect of any will result in suffering.

3. Man has a body with various organs organised into a number of operational systems. The growth, health and operational efficiency of the physical aspect depends on pollution free environment, nutritious intake and physical exercise.

4. Man is endowed with a number of natural urges like survival, activity, enjoyment of pleasure of the senses, egoism, interaction with environment, mental tendencies, sympathy, service, creativity, etc. They need manifestation and legitimate satisfaction which should not be denied. However, moderation must be observed since indulgence in their uncontrolled satisfaction will become the root cause of suffering.

5. Man acquires a number of worldly aspirations while interacting with worldly environment such as health, happiness, wealth, name, fame, harmony, peace, progress etc. There is nothing wrong in acquiring, accumulating, enjoying these worldly assets and fulfilling these aspirations. They are the blessings of human life and worth all the effort. But after the age of sixty years, detachment from worldly aspirations is a must. Otherwise, any further indulgence in worldly aspirations will lead to suffering.

6. Man has a limited span of life with various developmental stages of childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. During the

process of this development, man passes through the stages of growth, development, sustenance, decay and death which cannot be avoided under any circumstance. With advancing age, the four aspects of life undergo inevitable and irreversible changes. Therefore, natural urges, social aspirations, interaction with the world and all individual effort must be adjusted accordingly. If this is not done, man is doomed to untold suffering.

7. Happiness is the divine birth right of man and at the same time an obligation. Man must try his best to be happy and be free from suffering. This is possible only when he develops himself into his true form and right functions and leads his life in a spirit of dedication and love. This is his Dharma which he must observe.

8. Man is his own best friend and his own worst enemy. A calm and controlled mind disciplined through the practices of yoga and performance of yajna are the keys to happiness in life. That will enable him to develop his potential abilities to the optimum and perform his ordained obligations to his satisfaction.

9. Society is a divine institution created for the welfare of the individual. An individual should seek the help of social institutions in his development and at the same time make his contribution towards the advancement of society through active participation in its activities.

10. Man must always be rooted in "Goodness" and never go astray from the path of Dharma. God is the representative concept of goodness. He should always abide with both God and Goodness and enjoy his stay in this world. Only thus at the last moment of his life, man will be able to fade away from this world with a smile on his face and peace in his mind.

Questions

1. In your opinion, what is the aim of human life?

2. What aspects of your life have been reasonably developed?

3. What aspect of your life has remained under-developed?

4. Do you believe in life after death? Give reasons for your answer.

5. Carry out an assessment of yourself as under :

a. Out of the four aspects of your life listed under Section D which in your opinion is :

i. the most developed ( ) Award marks out of 10 ( )

ii. the least developed ( ) Award marks out of 10 ( )

b. Out of the physiological systems mentioned under Section F (a) (i), state three which are operating at reasonably good efficiency level. Award marks out of 10

i. ( ) // ( )

ii. ( ) // ( )

c. Which physiological system of yours is the least efficient :–

i. ( ) // ( )

d. Out of the 14 natural urges stated under section G and column (d) of the chart. State three which are the strongest in you. Rate their intensity in marks out of 10.

i. ( ) // ( )

ii. ( ) // ( )

iii. ( ) // ( )

e. Under column (e) in the chart are listed acquired aspirations. Mention three which are the strongest and prompt you into serious action. Award marks out of 10

i. ( ) // ( )

ii. ( ) // ( )

iii. ( ) // ( )

f. Under column (g) are listed the various sequential stages of development of the four aspect of life. In your opinion what is the stage that you have reached at present :

i. Physical Aspect

ii. Psychological Aspect

iii. Social Aspect

iv. Spiritual Aspect

g. Under Section G are given ten virtuous tendencies. State any three which you have in good measure. Award marks out to 10

i. (   )   //   (   )

ii. (   )   //   (   )

iii. (   )   //   (   )

h. Under Section G are also given ten vicious tendencies. Do you suffer from any of these significantly? State them.

i. (   )

ii. (   )

iii. (   )

i. Out of the points stated under column (j) in the chart, which one do you observe in you to a great extent ?

i. Physical ......

ii. Psychological ......

iii. Social ......

iv. Spiritual ......

* * *

A Comprehensive view of man

A	B	C	D	E
Aspects	Physical Aspect	Psychological Aspect	Social Aspect	Spiritual Aspect
b. Structure	1. Sense Organs 2. Motor Organs 3. Brain 4. Heart 5. Endocrine glands 6. Others	1. Mind 2. Intellect 3. Ego 4. Sub-conscious (Memory) 5. Unconscious	1. Social Unconscious 2. Instincts 3. Aspirations	1. Divine Mind 2. Intuition
c. Systems	1. Physiological Systems 2. Elemental Systems 3. Homeostasis System 4. Life System 5. Energy System	1. Desire System 2. Thought System 3. Volitional System 4. Memory System 5. Cathartic System	1. Interaction System 2. Attraction System 3. Aversion System 4. Indifference	1. Faith 2. Empathy 3. Detachment
d. Natural Urges	1. Survival 2. Development 3. Activity 4. Repose	1. Egoism 2. Enjoyment of pleasure of the senses 3. Mental tendencies 4. Hope	1. Identity 2. Assertion 3. Expression	1. Benefaction 2. Creativity 3. Peace
e. Acquired Aspirations	1. Health 2. Appearance 3. Self-love	1. Happiness 2. Self-Esteem	1. Name, Fame 2. Wealth 3. Power, status 4. Progeny	1. Service 2. Sacrifice 3. Renunciation

A	B	C	D	E
Aspects	Physical Aspect	Psychological Aspect	Social Aspect	Spiritual Aspect
f. Motive Force	1. Consciousness 2. Energy	1. Desires 2. Thoughts 3. Feelings, Emotions 4. Imagination 5. Will-power	1. Self esteem 2. Recognition 3. Appreciation 4. Social environment	1. Introspection 2. Inspiration 3. Revelations
g. Developmental Stages	1. Pre-natal 0 2. Infancy 0-3 3. Childhood 4-11 4. Adolescence 12-18 5. Early Adulthood 18-40 6. Later Adulthood 41-60 7. Old Age 61-	1. Passionate 2. Acquisitive 3. Dominant 4. Composed 5. Restrained	1, Interaction 2. Relationship 3. Cultivation 4. Integration	1. Wonder 2. Curiosity 3. Vision of Self 4. Love for follow men 5. Vision of God 6. Self-Realisation
h. Hereditary Influences	1. Genome 2. Pre-natal experiences 3. Childhood experiences 4. Health of the body 5. Operational efficiency of the systems	1. Subtle body in under-developed form	-	-
i. Social Influences	1. Physical environment 2. Desirable habits 3. Intake. 4. Chance events.	1.Social Environment 2. Education 3. Chance Events	1. Family 2. Peer group 3. Cultural Group 4. State Authority 5. Chance Meeting	1. Teacher. 2. Chance events.
J. Volitional Influences	1. Pollution free environment. 2. Balanced intake. 3. Hard work. 4. Desirable habits. 5. Physical exercise.	1. Constant awareness of thoughts, feeling words, actions 2. Acquisition of true knowledge 3. Introspection 4. Practice of Yoga	1. Good company 2. Sincere and honest relationship 3. Balance in the four aspects of life. 4. Performance of ordained duties. 5. Moderation in enjoyment of pleasure of senses.	1. Suitable life-style 2. Study of scripture 3. Disciplined and regulated life 4. Social service 5. Faith 6. Prayer 7. Sacrifice for a good cause.

VI. Society

A. Introduction

From the very beginning, man is said to have lived in groups which moved from place to place in search of food and safety. Later, he found that places on river banks and near the foothills were the best locations for food, water and safety. So, most groups settled around tropic of Cancer at 23½° north along the river banks. Thus most ancient civilisations developed in such regions. Indo-Gangetic plains, China, Babylonia, Egypt and Greece are the regions where early civilisationss prospered. At these places, human societies were formed and people began to lead a settled and comfortable life.

B. Meaning of society

Modern societies are very different from the ancient societies. Ancient societies were very simple, homogeneous and less regulated. Modern societies are very complex, heterogeneous and highly regulated. A modern society is defined as the sum of human conditions and activities— regarded as a whole and functioning inter-dependently. It is still a group of persons— large or small, settled in a small or vast area and having a common way of life. But ancient societies were organised along cultures. Modern societies are organised along nation-states. Today, the predominant element of a society is tending to be more and more along national boundaries.

A. Society is constituted by the following components :

a. *Population* : Primarily, society is composed of a number of individuals. Their number may be a few thousand or more than a crore. The composition of population may be homogeneous or heterogeneous. In modern times, it is mostly heterogeneous because of easy mobility and inter-mixing.

b. *Territory* : Every society as a nation-state has a well demarcated territory called country. The area may be small or vast.

c. *Physical environment and natural resources* : Whatever exists within the limits of that territory, legitimately belongs to that society. The soil, the terrain, forests, mountains, rivers, minerals, etc. all are the property of that society.

d. *A set of Laws* : Every society has a set of laws which define the relationship between individuals, individuals and groups, and groups and groups. This could be in the form of a constitution, laws, customs, traditions etc. It may be written or conventional.

e. *Culture* : It is not an essential element of society. But due to close proximity and prolonged interaction, the people come to have a common set of beliefs and life-style which is loosely called culture. A society may consist of a number of cultures, having some common elements and some diverse elements. Most of the societies today are multi-cultural.

C. Meaning of culture

Culture is a vague and not a well defined concept. It means refined or improved way of living. Edward Taylor defined culture as– "The complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs and other capabilities, and habits acquired by man as a member of the society." The main components of culture are :

a. Fundamental beliefs :

i. Concept of God, universe, man, society and true knowledge
ii. Aims of human life
iii. Ways to achieve those aims of life
iv. Concept of Dharma and Adharma

b. Secondary beliefs :

i. Concept of family
ii. Concept of social, economic and political orders
iii. Concept of creativity and its manifestations in the form of art and literature

c. Institutional arrangements for propagation and preservation of culture :

i. Scriptures, codes, commandments, Laws, Constitution
ii. Symbols, rituals, festivals, superstitions, myths
iii. Customs, traditions
iv. Institutions

- Family
- Places of worship
- School
- Social groupings
- Government
- Others

D. Aims of society :

The aims of society have been expanding over the ages. In ancient times, the aims were– peaceful co-existence, security from external dangers and dispensation of justice. However, with the emergence of the concept of welfare state, the aims of societies have also widened. In a modern society, the followings are the aims of a society :

a. *Peaceful co-existence* : The members should live in peace without any discord and violence.

b. *Harmony* : The members should have harmonious relationship and help each other in day-to-day interaction.

c. *Prosperity* : The members should jointly engage themselves in productive activities and have adequate means of satisfaction of their wants.

d. *Progress* : Every society forms an idea of progress in terms of material advancements– social, moral and spiritual, etc. This becomes their concept of progress. The society makes serious and sustained efforts towards such progress.

e. *Happiness* : The ultimate aim of all individuals and societies is a feeling of satisfaction, a sense of wellness and happiness.

E. Groupings and divisions in a society

In order to achieve the diverse aims of a society, the members organise themselves into groups. Some of these groups are obligatory while others are voluntary.

a. **Obligatory groups** : Individuals from their very birth are members of such groups. These groups may be based on region, religion, language, race, caste, culture, etc. They are more or less permanent and work as pressure groups in the society. So, very often they create tensions and conflicts,

and sometimes even violence. They are a great barrier to integration of the society. Often, it is very difficult to reconcile the conflicting interests of these groups. This is the greatest problem of most of the societies in the world today. Education, rationalism, spiritualism and interaction are the steps which can be taken to lessen the mutual bickering of these groups. This is particularly so in the case of old countries and big countries.

b. **Voluntary groups** : There are a number of groups formed by public-spirited persons and joined by individuals on voluntary basis. Their membership is fluid and has a limited common purpose. Such groups may have some academic, economic, social, cultural or political aims to achieve. Such groups or associations serve very useful purpose. They enliven and activate their members into diverse social activities.

c. **Occupational groups** : In some societies, people are organised along occupations. This is known as occupational classification of the society. In India, following is the national classification of occupations :

1. Professional, Technical and Related workers.
2. Administrative, executive and managerial workers.
3. Clerical and Related workers.
4. Sales workers.
5. Service workers.
6. Farmers, fishermen, hunters, loggers and related workers.
7. Production and Related workers, etc.

8-10. Other workers.

These occupational groups organise themselves into associations, unions, etc. and look after the interests of their members.

It is normal and natural in every society to form groups. They serve useful purposes of looking after group interests, and welfare of individuals who otherwise feel isolated and weak. However, it has been experienced that many times, the associations do not function

properly either because of inadequate participation in the activities of the associations by the members or inadequate supervision and control by the government. Therefore, it is necessary that the guidelines for the formation and functioning of such associations are reviewed and revised from time to time to ensure transparency, democratic functioning, financial accounting and supervisory control. Responsibility, authority, accountability and disciplinary procedure, etc. must be in-built in the constitution of the association so that the interests of the members are well safeguarded. In the absence of adequate participation and supervisory control, the associations get monopolised by a few persons and are misused by them for their personal vested interests.

Division of society in ancient India was based on the psychological and spiritual status of man. The four divisions of society into Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra indicated the developmental stages of mind, intellect, ego and the unconscious (Gita XVIII 41-53, IV, 13). Later, this division degenerated and fossilised into birth-based caste system with so many aberrations in the social set up. This old classification represented their personal status and determined their social responsibilities, upbringing, education, training, mental tendencies, habits and life-style.

F. Nature of society

Society is characterised by the following features :

a. Everlasting : Society goes on existing while its members continue to change. The Indian society may be more than ten thousand years old. Also, it will continue to exist in the distant future. The leaders of the society should, therefore, take a long term view of all measures which they may take for the welfare of the society. Sometimes, even unpopular steps may have to be taken for long term gains. Individuals may be selfish and short-sighted but leaders of the society cannot afford to be so. This is particularly relevant for those who legislate and formulate laws, codes, traditions and conventions. The future of a society depends upon the quality of its leaders. In a democracy, this imposes a great responsibility on every citizen because every citizen through his vote elects the legislators and the leaders of the society. This is important at all levels where members have to elect office bearers of their associations.

b. Ever changing : A society is not static but ever-changing. Not only that its members change, but its traditions, its aspirations, its convictions and its mindset always continue to change. Society today is not the same as it was a decade ago. Fashions, relationships, appearances, all have changed. Technologies, modes of production, likes and dislikes go on changing. It is, therefore, necessary that the leaders of the society and even individuals should be prepared to adjust themselves to the new situations. Leaders and even intelligent individuals should be able to foresee the changes and prepare themselves to face the evolving circumstances. Those who do not or cannot adjust accordingly, should be prepared to suffer.

c. Plurality : Every society, association and even a group consists of more than one person. Since all persons in a society have equal status, everybody has equal rights and obligations. Only that group, association or society prospers where members exercise their rights and fulfil their obligations. If one person or a few persons monopolise the whole authority, then only those individual members will prosper while the society will go down. All the members of a society have to be participatory, responsive and responsible. Only then the society will progress– be it a family, a class, a team, an institution, an association or the whole society.

d. Diversity : In any society, no two individuals are the same. In physical features, temperament and character traits – every person is different and unique. So, as a member, we should accept every other member at his face value. Diversity should not become the cause of discord or discrimination. Difference does not necessarily mean superiority or inferiority. We have the right to establish surface relationship or intimate relationship with a member, but we have no right to belittle or humiliate or hate any other member of the society simply because he is different. At the most, we may be indifferent to a member who does not meet our expectations. Hatred harms the hater, more than it harms the hated.

e. Reciprocity : Another feature of society and social relationship is reciprocity of behaviour. You will get from the other person what you sincerely give him. Love begets love. Courtesy begets courtesy. Hatred begets hatred. Therefore, in order to expect love and affection from others, we have to give the same to others and give it

in abundance. Only then, we shall have harmonious relationship in the society and benefit from the membership of the society. We have a right to withdraw but no right to whine. We have to be well adjusted members of the society.

G. Qualities of a progressive society

A progressive society has the following characteristics :

a. Flexible and not rigid : The structure of society should be flexible and not rigid. There should be scope for vertical as well as horizontal mobility. There should be hope and scope for improvement of status. If one is condemned for the whole of his life for no fault of his, there is no motivation for him to improve and make progress. Therefore, permanent groupings on the basis of region, religion, caste, race, colour or such factors, should not be encouraged. Flexible groupings based on occupation, interest, aptitude, ability, etc. should be encouraged.

b. Responsibility, authority and accountability should go together : Authority without responsibility leads to injustice, responsibility without accountability leads to inefficiency and responsibility without authority leads to stagnation. The three must go together. All rewards and punishments should be linked to this trinity. Authority must be responsive to the people, needs and aspirations.

c. Merit and competence should be the only criteria for assignment of responsibility: Society has to perform certain tasks and achieve certain aims. The responsibility for achieving these aims has to be entrusted to different agencies and individuals who should be competent enough to fulfil those responsibilities. Otherwise, the society will stagnate and decay.

d. Multiple points of power : Man is man and he is subject to a number of temptations and weaknesses. It is an often experienced phenomena in the society that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. This is the most tragic end of all the dictators. Therefore, to avoid concentration of power, centres of power should be well balanced. Various wings in an association, institution, organisation or any set up should be endowed with just adequate power with proper safeguards.

e. Regard for dignity of the individual - Society must have due regard for an individual. During the last three hundred years, there has been a powerful compaign for the ascent of man through such slogans as equality, liberty and fraternity. Philosophers and social reformers have raised their voice against the oppressive and exploitative power of the church, the monarchy and the State to improve the status of the individual. "Man is born free but everywhere he is found in chains" sums up the status of man upto the 17th century. But some societies have still to recognise the worth of an individual member and honour him with dignity.

f. Rule of Law

Socially, politically and legally, all individuals of a society are equal and all should be covered by the same set of rules and laws without any discrimination. That alone can guarantee justice and fair play. Without this feeling of safety and security, an individual does not give his best to the society. Equitable justice is the basis of a civilised society. Also, judicial system should help to establish courts of justice and not merely courts of law. If the undeserving is not weeded out, at the earliest, from his post of authority, he will continue to exploit and harm the society.

g. Social Justice

This requires not only equal opportunities, but equalising opportunities so that the weaker sections can compete on equal terms.

h. Privacy of personal life

Man has many natural urges and social aspirations. Society must provide scope to its members to fulfil the same. So, he should be allowed sufficient scope for individual initiative and sense of achievement by organising his personal life in the way he likes. That gives him a sense of purpose and satisfaction. Therein lies the joy of life.

H. Co-ordination and control in society

Control in society is being exercised through the agency of a government machinery, organised and run in accordance with the provisions of a written or unwritten constitution.

These days the government is constituted by the following three wings :-

a. **Legislature** - responsible for enactment of laws under the constitution for the running of the constitutional organisations, control of voluntary organisations, inter-personal relations among individuals and achievement of other aims of the society.

b. **Executive** - responsible for the enforcement and implementation of the laws framed by the legislative wing through its various agencies. The executive authority exercises control over associations and individuals in accordance with the law. It is also responsible to ensure the achievement of the aims of the government.

c. **Judiciary** - responsible to ensure that laws enacted are in accordance with the provisions of the constitution, the enforcement of the laws in accordance with the prescribed procedure and no member of the society infringes upon the rights and privileges of other members of the society. Retributive justice is also the responsibility of the judiciary.

These organs of the government can be the cause of inconvenience, disability and unhappiness as well as comfort, capability and happiness of the citizens. So, they have great importance in determining the nature and quality of a society.

I. Characteristics of a modern society

a. Environmental requirments

i. Pollution free and healthy environmental.
ii. Maintenance of ecological balance.
iii. Adequate forest cover.
iv. Efficient management of natural resources.
v. Welfare of animal life.

b. Members should have:

i. Positive outlook.
ii. Hard-working nature.
iii. Effort towards self-development.
iv. Moderation in seeking pleasures of the senses.

v. Balance in various aspect of life.
vi. Realistic worldly aspirations.

c. Society should ensure :

i. Peace and order
ii. Social justice
iii. Harmonious relationship
iv. Universal general education
v. Health cover for all
vi. Efficient civic amenities:
- Water.
- Electricity.
- Roads.
- Transport.
- Housing.
- Sanitation.

d. Knowledge should be based on :

i. Rationalism
ii. Humanism
iii. Spiritualism

e. Social Order should emphasise :

i. Stable family life.
ii. Individual liberty
iii. Social welfare of the child, elderly, disabled
iv. Discipline and order
v. Speedy, cheap and fair judicial System
vi. Religious harmony
vii. Freedom of conscience and personal beliefs.
viii. Safety of religious places of worship

f. Economic Order should promote :

i. Research in Science and Technology
ii. Vocational, technical and professional education
iii. Employment opportunities

iv. Infra-structure :

- Power
- Transport
- Communication
- Roads
- Banking, Insurance, Investment
- Mass Media
- Social Justice
- High growth rate

g. Political Order should have :

i. Written Constitution

ii. Rule of Law

iii. Universal franchise

iv. Secularism

v. Nationalism

J. Individual and Society

As compared to the society, an individual is an insignificant entity. Society may constitute millions of persons, while an individual is only one person. Interaction of an individual with this big society is at three levels :–

(a) Intimate Level.

(b) Intermediate Level.

(c) Remote Level.

a. Intimate level : There are some members of the society with whom an individual interacts very frequently and very intimately. Such persons form his immediate social group. They are related to him on the basis of blood, neighbourhood, occupation or for some other common factor. Such groups fall into four categories.

i. **Family members.** This is the smallest unit of society but the most important one. This unit takes care of the individual during his infancy and supports him through adulthood and old age. A family could be a joint family with grand-parents, parents, brothers, sisters, children, uncles and aunts. A family could be a small family with parents, self and children. It

could be a nuclear family with spouse and children only. A family has common property, common kitchen, common income and shares joys and sorrows. The basis of the family is trust, service and sacrifice. Sharing and caring are the two pillars on which the arch of family welfare stands. The watchword of a family is– one for all and all for one. It is from one's capacity to one's needs. It is a commune looking after its own welfare. Family is the backbone of a society. A well-knit, prosperous and happy family is the best guarantee against all odds. The responsibility for raising such a family depends upon the eldest member of the family who should be intelligent, impartial, firm and tactful to keep his flock together and kicking. Other members of the family must be disciplined, responsible and accommodating. Most of all, happiness of an individual is in direct proportion to the happiness of the family. Therefore, one must be very sincere and honest in dealing with members of his family.

ii. **Soul-mate and intimate friends.** The second most important intimate unit of society consists of soul-mate and intimate friends. Soul-mate is a person in whom an individual has implicit faith and shares with him all his sorrows and joys. He is his conscience keeper, weeping shoulder and soldier-in-arms. He may be a member of the family, a relative or a friend. An individual interacts with this group very frequently and very intimately. Incidentally, we choose these persons ourselves. They influence our life to a great extent. So, one must be very careful in choosing a soul-mate or an intimate friend. They must be good, honest, sincere and virtuous. They should always give honest and beneficial advice and stand together through thick and thin.

iii. **Colleagues at work-place.** This is the third small social unit with which an individual interacts very frequently and intimately. One must be careful in developing intimacy with his colleagues. It is better to be alone than in bad company. One golden rule is to be close only to those who are sincere and honest. Those who are committed to their duty and efficient in their work deserve our friendship at workplace.

Social vices and bad habits are generally contracted from work-colleagues. So, one must be careful in developing intimacy with work colleagues.

iv. **Neighbours.** The fourth intimate social group is constituted by the neighbours with whom one comes into contact quite frequently and in diverse situations. In urban areas, this group is losing its importance because of the hectic busy schedule. However, in towns and villages, this group is still important. Here also, the golden rule is to develop intimacy with virtuous persons and to remain indifferent but warm and courteous towards all others.

Our happiness depends largely on the quality of our intimate social group. So, we should be careful in our social interactions with this group.

b. Intermediate level. At intermediate level, there are three social sub-groups with whom an individual interacts :-

i. Relatives and friends.

ii. Professional and occupational groups.

iii. Other social groups based on religion, culture, special interests, etc.

Interaction with these groups in not so frequent and also not so intimate. However, it is out of these groups that we pick individuals fit for our intimate relationship.

c. Remote level. Social groups at remote level are constituted by leaders of the society, mass media and social gatherings. Interaction with this group is less frequent and mostly indirect. But it has its influence depending upon the sensitivity of our interaction with them.

Since social interaction is inevitable and unavoidable, we have to be careful and interact with only such persons who are honest and virtuous. That way, we shall get the best from the society and benefit from its legacy.

K. The Indian Society

The Indian Society is said to be characterised by the following features :

a. One of the oldest societies- The Indian society, if not the oldest is, certainly one, of the oldest societies of the world. The Mahabharat is believed to have been fought more than 5000 years from now. The Vedas are believed to be more than 10,000 years old. The same lineage of society of the hoary past is continuing with some of the oldest beliefs, traditions and rituals. The long history of the Indian society has seen many ups and downs, several waves of humanity surging into the Gangetic plain and becoming a part of the existing society. This has resulted in an amazing and even bewildering diversity of religions, languages, cultures etc. From animistic rituals to Vedantic philosophy are flourishing side by side. In terms of dress, food, festivals, customs, etc. perhaps such rich and colourful diversity may not be visible anywhere else. But this diversity has also imposed a fragmentation of the social fabric resulting in tensions and conflicts.

b. A heterogeneous society- Old age and vast area has resulted in heterogeneous character of the society. The richest and the poorest of the world could be found co-existing in Indian society. The illiterate and the scholar, the saint and the scoundrel, the virtuous and the vicious, the ultra modern and the ultra traditional, the palace and the straw hut, car and the cart, the rich and the poor co-exist in close proximity. This diversity is panoramic as well as puzzling.

c. A society in transition- The Indian society is in a state of accelerated transition. During the last thirty years, the middle class has risen to pinnacles of progress bringing in a revolution in economy and politics. There has been an explosion in academic field, technology and modernisation. There is a visible improvement in standard of living of a vast segment of the population. It is hoped that the process will continue and during the next twenty years, the lowest segment of 30% of the population will also march ahead. There is wide awakening. Traditional Indian society has become an aspiring modern society.

d. A tolerant society- The Indian society, by and large is a tolerant society. People are law abiding and peace loving. This is due to the long tradition of academic freedom and freedom of conscience in the ancient culture of India where diversity of views was accepted and honoured. This has provided a resilience and stability to the

society. The democratic traditions and spiritual leanings have further helped to follow a policy of live and let live.

L. Some Weaknesses of the Indian Society

The Indian society suffers from some basic weaknesses which are proving to be a great liability. Some of the more glaring weaknesses are :

a. A Feudal Society

From ancient times, the Indian society has been a highly structured and hierarchical society. The four classes of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras had been compartmentalised and declared as a hierarchical society ordained by God. The Brahmins and the Kshatriyas constituted the classes and the Vaishyas and Shudras the masses. The masses were at the mercy of the first two classes. But fortunately, they had a peaceful life, although not a very comfortable and honourable one.

The Kshatriyas were the ruling class. Constant warfare was their obligatory duty. Every ruler wanted to extend the frontiers of his kingdom by attacking his neighbouring kingdom. So all the Kshatriya kings were always at war with one another. Also, the kings appointed landlords in their kingdom to collect land revenue and maintain law and order. The landlords who were also warlords had not much to do and led a luxurious life. So they were always at loggerheads among themselves. These feuds vitiated the social atmosphere and gave birth to a system which came to be known as the Feudal System. It was characterised by a class of landlord who had a highly inflated ego, a false sense of vanity, led a luxurious life and oppressed and exploited the Vaishyas and the Shudras. Such a system prevailed not only in India, but also in almost all the countries of Asia and Europe.

The same mentality of oppression and exploitation continues even today among those who wield muscle power, money power and official power. In the rural areas of the whole country, such powers continue to illegally usurp the privileges meant for the backward and the poor. They have also monopolised the political power through unscrupulous means. The land reforms, the welfare measures, etc. initiated by the State are not being seriously

implemented because of their manipulation. This has also vitiated the political atmosphere. This must end for the welfare of the society.

b. Mismatch between authority and responsibility

There is wide-spread corruption and inefficiency in the government. Everybody is aware of the same but everybody seems to be helpless. India leads more than hundred countries of the world in corruption and inefficiency. This is because authority and responsibility do not go together. Legislators have all the authority but no responsibility. Bureaucracy has all the responsibility but no accountability. Nobody is held responsible for delays, irregularities and scams. This is because the same feudal lords are at the helm of affairs in politics as well as in bureaucracy. The unholy alliance must be broken. Not only the academic qualifications but the character traits should also form part of the procedure for apportionment of persons on posts of responsibility and authority.

c. Deficiencies in Law

The laws in India are enacted by the legislators who are again the feudal lords of old mentality. How ridiculous it is that people with criminal cases going against them in courts of law very conveniently manage to become legislators and even cabinet ministers. A large number of the legislators have against them such cases as murder, kidnapping, robbery and cheating. The law is helpless and the society continues to suffer. The law appears to be an ass and the courts continue to remain courts of law instead of being courts of justice. The judicial system needs total revamping.

d. Erosion of moral values

In the name of secularism, religious education has no place in the education system. Whatever religious education is being imparted in private schools is imparted by fundamentalists which is totally against the spirit of democracy and constitution. Education has become just information. Society has opted to ignore morality in day-to-day life. The moral climate has degenerated into amoral climate at the higher levels of the society. This does not auger well for the society.

M. Some suggestions– Perhaps the following steps could help :–

a. Rationalisation of the Law

There are thousands of enacted laws in the country. Nearly two third of them have never been utilised since independence. Perhaps they have become irrelevant. Many of the laws do not serve the purpose for which they had been enacted There is a need to review all the laws and assess how far they are serving the purpose for which they had been enacted. The earlier this is done, the better.

b. Matching of responsibility, authority, and accountability

At present, there is a great disparity between responsibility, authority and accountability. The eligibility conditions, the selection procedure, the performance assessment, the accountability process, the disciplinary procedure, etc. need review and modifications. It is a shame that a nation of 120 crores is not able to elect 5000 competent and deserving legislators for the country, or select ten thousand competent and deserving officers to govern the country. This must change.

c. Spiritualisation of Education

Secularism does not mean indifference to moral values. The inner springs of behaviour must be well disciplined. The virtuous mental tendencies must be strengthened and the vicious mental tendencies must be curbed during the early years of life of the child through the education system. Religious education must be freed from the baneful influence of the fundamentalists. It should not be difficult to discipline the normal weaknesses of human nature. If that is not done, there can be no hope for society. At least the undeserving should not be allowed to reach the position of authority and responsibility. If somehow, they manage to reach such positions, it should be possible to identify them at the earliest and weed them out from the system. The longer they stay, greater the damage to the society.

N Conclusion

The Indian society has great potential and great resilience. It has successfully faced great upheavals. It has thrown up great leaders even during the darkest periods of its history who guided its destiny in an astonishing manner. But somehow, the present political set up is not allowing the most talented to come up and assume the

leadership. However, there is nothing to despair. There are clear indications of the silent revolution in the following directions :

a. Faster modernisation.

b. Deeper spiritualisation.

c. Wider interaction.

d. Pride in being a citizen of India.

e. Soaring aspirations for a bright future.

The youths of India will soon take up the leadership of the Indian society. Surely, you are going to be one among them.

Summary

1. Society is a divine organisation and therefore, it must be accepted and respected for the stability, security and support which it has provided to you through out your life.

2. Every society is characterised by a special culture of its own. This culture has developed through time in the special geographical and historical circumstances of that society. So, all cultures are different- but not necessarily superior or inferior.

3. With the passage of time, some elements in the culture of every society need modifications and adjustment in view of the changed circumstances. Therefore, leaders of the society must review periodically the cultural content of their society and bring about suitable changes in the age-old customs, traditions, etc. and thus, modernise their culture.

4. Structure of a society is based on moral and spiritual foundations or divine elements namely happiness, wisdom and love. These are essential ingredients of every good culture and must be inculcated in the new generation through various religious, social, cultural and political institutions, particularly through the educational, administrative and judicial systems.

5. Man should make his contribution for the preservation and enrichment of his culture by active and meaningful participation in the social activities of his immediate cultural group.

Questions

1. State some characteristic features of your cultural group.

2. Name some customs and traditions of your culture which you observe.

3. What, in your opinion, are the strong points of your culture?

4. State a few changes which you will like to bring about in the content of your couture.

5. State some cultural activities of your society in which you generally participate.

6. What changes have come about in your culture during the last hundred years or so?

* * *

VII. Knowledge

A. Importance of knowledge

"Knowledge is power" is a famous proverb. Knowledge gives us the power of better discrimination, better judgement, better choice, more suitable decision, more effective action and greater chances of success. Therefore, we seek knowledge. Society has established schools and other institutions which impart knowledge to upcoming generations. We read good books written by knowledgeable persons to acquire knowledge. Also, we meet scholars and seek knowledge from them.

Our scriptures affirm that knowledge alone leads to an end of suffering and attainment of salvation. Knowledge has been held in high esteem not only in India but also in all parts of the world and in all ages. In Greece, China and elsewhere, knowledge had been greatly valued. Academies had been established to impart knowledge. Eager scholars travelled long distances, unmindful of the ensuing difficulties, to join such academies and acquire knowledge. Let us consider some questions relating to knowledge so that we have a better insight into such questions as–

a. What is knowledge?

b. How do we acquire knowledge?

c. How has knowledge accumulated through the ages?

d. How do we test the validity of knowledge?

e. How to use knowledge?

B. Human equipment to acquire knowledge

All living beings have sets of physiological equipment to acquire knowledge. Lower animals have simple and rudimentary equipment, while human beings have very sophisticated and well developed equipment. At birth, such equipment is not so developed. But with age, it goes on developing. Human beings, through special efforts, can develop such equipment to an unimaginable extent. That is how so much knowledge has been created by man through the ages. Let us have a look at such equipment.

a) Instinctive equipment

Man has a number of natural urges right from his birth. He can neither ignore nor deny them, their manifestation and satisfaction. Such urges are survival, growth, activity and repose, etc. These urges compel man to interact with his environment and adjust himself accordingly. Man is also endowed with some core knowledge from the time of birth itself for such interaction and adjustment. The earliest motion of one celled organism investigating its surroundings for food was the first step towards the manifestation of its innate core knowledge and also its attempt to acquire knowledge about its surrounding. The new born baby clings to its mother to suck milk from the breast so as to survive. It is also its first attempt to acquire knowledge and enrich its core knowledge. Our instincts or natural urges manifest themselves through unconditioned reflex actions, autonomous systems and sub-conscious activities. Thus, the baby acquires a great deal of instinctive knowledge during the early years of his life through his instinctive apparatus. It is difficult to say what this apparatus is and where it is located.

b) Perceptual equipment

As the baby advances in age, the body develops and his physiological systems become more efficient and effective. This is

more so in the case of his sense organs and nervous system. His sense organs become his perceptual equipment and help him to acquire more and more knowledge about his environment. The ears receive sound signals, the eyes see visual images, the nose sniffs odour, the tongue enjoys flavours and skin feels sensations. These messages are conveyed through this perceptual apparatus to the sensory centres in the forebrain. The mind co-ordinates all such messages and passes them on to the intellect for drawing out a meaning from the perceptual experience. Thus, the child gathers more and more information about the world around him and enriches his stock of core knowledge. The parents help the child in this process by describing the perceptual experiences in the common language. A blind man cannot see, a deaf man cannot hear. So their capacity to acquire knowledge remains limited and they remain handicapped.

Through his faculty of memory, the child can recall his past experiences and use his knowledge to his advantage. However, while acquiring knowledge through the perceptual equipment, one must be careful and in the given situation, he should use as many sense organs in acquiring knowledge as is possible. Otherwise, the knowledge acquired may be incomplete or even incorrect. A piece of glass from a distance may appear to be a piece of silver because of its glitter. So, other senses of touch, smell, taste, etc. must also be used to avoid any such incorrect conclusion.

Perceptual equipment is the basic and most important apparatus of acquiring knowledge. The resultant perceptual knowledge is generally considered to be valid and reliable. Most of the knowledge about the surrounding world is acquired through the perceptual equipment. Therefore, there is importance of sensory training in early childhood. Montessory Method had been developed for this purpose and is being used very widely throughout the world. However, perceptual equipment can best serve as an apparatus of perceptual knowledge under the following conditions :–

i. The sense organs must be in good form.

ii. The sensory faculty centres in the forebrain should be operative and efficient.

iii. The mind should be conscious and attentive during perception.

iv. As many sense organs should be used in perception as possible.

v. The description of perceptual experience should be faithful to perception.

vi. The language used should be correct and comprehensible.

c) **Conceptual equipment**

Most of the information in early life is acquired through the perceptual equipment. Almost all gross objects (proper nouns, common nouns and pronouns), many action words (Verbs) and qualifying words (Adjectives and Adverbs) are comprehended through sense organs. However, abstract nouns and abstract qualities cannot be perceived through sense organs. They are comprehended through the subtle organs of mind and intellect, and helped by the abilities of visualisation, memory, imagination and logic. This is done by converting gross objects, actions and qualities into concepts. The intangible concepts are like representative symbols of the gross tangible objects and qualities. Honesty, religion, circle, energy, speed, etc. are concepts which represent tangible objects, actions and qualities in their verbal incarnation. Through the conceptual equipment of mind and intellect and aided by memory, visualisation, imagination and logic, man understands what is meant by them. As for example, the concept of "Boat" can be comprehended by the mind even in the absence of an actual boat with the help of the concept "Boat" on the basis of memory and visualisation. Advanced knowledge of science, mathematics, philosophy, psychology, etc. is acquired through this conceptual equipment. The knowledge, thus, gained may be called conceptual knowledge.

The capacity to acquire such conceptual knowledge depends upon the following factors :

i. Capacity to acquire perceptual knowledge.

ii. Span of concentration of mind. A distracted mind, a fickle mind or a fatigued mind cannot easily comprehend concepts and conceptual knowledge.

iii. Retention of previous knowledge in memory.

iv. Capacity to visualise and imagine situations.

v. Previous knowledge of the subject under consideration.

vi. Knowledge of rules and techniques of drawing inference and conclusions.

Acquisition of perceptual knowledge is comparatively easy than acquisition of conceptual knowledge. However, an average person can conveniently comprehend and acquire conceptual knowledge through the conceptual apparatus. But creation of conceptual knowledge requires higher level of competence. Philosophers, great scholars, scientists and saints alone can create conceptual knowledge. Men like Plato, Aristotle, Galalio, Issac Newton, Einstein, ancient Rishis, Arya Bhatta, Jagdish Chandra Bose, C.V. Raman and many others have created conceptual knowledge.

However, creation of conceptual knowledge is a very risky affair. It requires great care in drawing inference or conclusion. Risk is all the more when the process of inductive and deductive logic is adopted in drawing conclusions. There are definite rules of logic. If such rules are not taken care of or ignored or disregarded in the process of drawing inferences and conclusions, the knowledge thus created shall not be true knowledge but incorrect, false or partially correct knowledge. Much of the knowledge created by incompetent persons in the fields of religion, morality, ethics, sociology and even in philosophy and psychology is not true knowledge. Propositions presented by different philosophers, saints, prophets differ on account of this reason. Thus true knowledge and false knowledge get mixed up and it becomes difficult to identify true knowledge as distinguished from false knowledge. This is the main reason for differences in religion, morality, social ethics, social philosophies etc. Hence great care must be taken while dealing with conceptual knowledge. Validity of a statement must be examined critically before it is accepted as true knowledge.

d) Intuitional equipment

It is believed that man is endowed with consciousness. If a person remains conscious about his feelings, words and actions and leads a pure, judicious and divine life, his level of consciousness gets upgraded and his conceptual equipment also gets sharpened. Consequently, his capacity for creation of higher knowledge increases. Yoga including meditation is also believed to help the upgradation of consciousness. As a result of this effort towards such

self-improvement, intuition of the individual develops. Intuition is an inner spiritual capacity of a person which helps to acquire higher knowledge of a subject even without the intervention of sense organs, mind and intellect. Such knowledge may be called Intuitional Knowledge. This knowledge dawns on a person in a flash without any effort on his part. This is a sort of illumination and enlightenment and is often known as revelation. Saints and yogis are supposed to possess such capacity. Precepts like, "Lead me from darkness to light; from untruth to truth; from mortality to immortality" are not the result of perception or intellection but of revelation and realisation. Such intuitional knowledge is supposed to be of the highest order and is called divine knowledge.

Vedic Rishis, Mahavir, Buddha, Christ, Confucius, Hazrat Mohammad, Guru Nanak and many others have created a lot of such knowledge. This knowledge is not only informative but also inspiring. It is for this reason that we turn to intuitional knowledge. However, such knowledge cannot be created by everyone. It requires a very high level of consciousness, a restrained mind, a sharp intellect, and pure spirit. The life of such a person has to be a divine life. He is also just, compassionate and altruistic. He has no ill-will against anybody. He is a self-realised person. Only then such spiritual and intuitional knowledge oozes out of him. Such knowledge is the most precious treasure of mankind.

However, some persons who had not attained such spiritual heights, had also ventured to create such knowledge and in this process, a lot of wrong knowledge came into existence in the name of divine knowledge. In due course of time, it got mixed up with true intuitional knowledge and today, it is difficult to disentangle the two. False currency notes also get into circulation along with genuine currency notes and the common man on account of his ignorance or limited knowledge gets duped. So one has to be careful while using intuitional knowledge.

C. Trends in the creation of knowledge

15 Vast volume of knowledge existing today had been created by man through a slow and painstaking effort. Creation of knowledge started in the hoary past of man. Since then, knowledge has accumulated to unimaginable proportions and dimensions. Today,

thousands of libraries in the world are stocked with lacs of books on hundreds of subjects. Apart from books, knowledge is stored in CD, DVD, films, maps, charts, electronic media etc. Every day new knowledge is being created. Man is bewildered to see all this. This accumulation of knowledge has been going on for thousands of years. During various ages, different motivations have prompted the creation of knowledge. Some of the more important evolutionary trends in knowledge have been as under :

a. Survival based knowledge

During the early period of human history, man had to face the fury of natural forces and the fearful ferocity of wild animals. The main problem before him was of survival against odds. Food and safety were his main problems. Man struggled with all difficulties and succeeded in igniting fire, fighting wild animals, making of a wheel, putting up a hut, producing a raft, domesticating some animals like dog and cow, practising the art of agriculture etc. etc. During this period, he armed himself with lot of knowledge about nature, animals, himself and art of survival. He used this knowledge to his great advantage.

b. Enjoyment based knowledge

Once man had settled down comfortably on this planet earth, he thought beyond survival. Now he had enough leisure time at his disposal. So he thought of enjoying himself during that time. Pleasures of the senses came to him handy. He turned to music, dance, painting, sculpture and other manifestations of his inner urges. The new knowledge of fine arts and folk arts came into existence. This added new flavour to his life and he began to enjoy life with the help of this new knowledge.

c. Emergence of conceptual knowledge

With the accumulation of more and more perceptual knowledge and increased efficiency of mental faculties in the use of such knowledge, the mental capacity of man also increased. He began to appreciate art and beauty. He began to value good things of life. He developed his concept of a good life. This gave birth to the emergence of conceptual knowledge. He organised knowledge into different categories and disciplines. The more he resorted to

conceptual intellection, the more conceptual knowledge he could create. Thus the quantum of knowledge increased in quantity as well as quality.

d. Knowledge for salvation

As civilisation made further advances, man's self confidence increased. His imagination and aspirations soared higher and higher. Now he thought of higher aims of life like happiness and permanent release from suffering. He also thought of a better social order. Peace, prosperity and progress prompted him to seek salvation. This resulted in the creation of a completely new kind of knowledge which came to be called ethics, morality, religion, spirituality etc. Theology, mythology, mysticism and lot of new knowledge got created. This knowledge was later given a divine status.

e. Beginning of scientific knowledge

Subsequent to the creation of such divine literature, a lot of false literature also got created and this was used by unscrupulous persons to exploit the common man. Some of the propositions of such false divine literature ran counter to reality in the world. Such propositions were challenged by other knowledgeable persons and they placed the real facts before the people. Factual knowledge based on observation and investigation came to be known as scientific knowledge. A deeper investigation into the forces of nature and their relationship with the day-to-day life of man was made. This knowledge resulted from a rigorous process of observations, analysis, generalisations, formulation of laws and testing the validity of such laws. A new method of creation of knowledge was thus developed by man. Gradually, a lot of such new scientific knowledge has been created by man during the last two centuries.

f. Knowledge for human welfare

Application of scientific knowledge through the new technology combined with the misuse of so-called divine knowledge resulted in large scale economic and emotional exploitation of the common man resulting in a strange situation of opulence and poverty. A small minority of the royalty, nobles, landlords, capitalists and religious heads were exploiting the common man. They themselves led a luxurious life while vast majority of the people were forced to lead a miserable life. The degradation of Shudras in India and serfs in

Europe are glaring examples of such exploitations. This drew attention of many leaders of the society to question the existing religious, social, political and economic order. They focused their attention on Man and his welfare. They presented a blue print for a just and humane order of society. During this process new knowledge was created by such intellectuals and reformers in the fields of economics, political science and sociology. This new knowledge brought about a revolution in thought and social set-up. The entire existing knowledge came to be questioned for its validity and acceptance.

g. Socialisation of knowledge

Incidentally, for long time, all knowledge was the monopoly of a few scholars and particular religious heads. The common man had no access to the sources of knowledge because most of it was in oral form. With the invention of printing press, knowledge came to be compiled, categorised and made available to all at a reasonable price. Knowledge became the common property of the whole society. This socialisation of knowledge raised many embarrassing questions. International bodies of experts and specialists came to be formed for a deeper investigation of all knowledge for its validity.

Thus all knowledge came to be challenged and revalidated with reference to the new standards of liberty, equality, fraternity, justice, goodness and virtue. Common sense and usefulness became the touch stone of true knowledge. Reality and welfare were given precedence over logic and deductive process. Scientific method came to be applied to test the validity of all knowledge.

D. Present status of knowledge

Regarding the status of knowledge today, it can safely be asserted that there is a huge stock of knowledge. A large part of it is true and useful. However, a big part of it is uncertain and even untrue. The two are so mixed up that it is difficult to say what is true and what is not true. So, a common man when faced with a knowledge statement, is not able to say with certainty whether it is true or not. Take this statement "A good man leads a happy life and a bad man suffers." Sometimes, from one's actual experience in the world, man does not find it true. He becomes doubtful and refuses to accept this proposition. So man must acquire the necessary competence to

ascertain the validity of a knowledge statement before he intends to use that knowledge to solve his problems.

E. The future of knowledge

The creation of knowledge has seen many phases from the hoary past to the present day. There were times when the focus of knowledge was on survival followed by personal enjoyment. Later, conceptual knowledge gained ground. More than two thousand years earlier, the focus of knowledge was on salvation. Later on, an insight into the mysteries of nature gained importance and sciences occupied the prime of place. During recent times, welfare of man has become the main concern of intellectuals, scholars, scientists, philosophers and saints. With the socialisation of knowledge and easy accessibility of knowledge to the common man, knowledge has become the property of the community. It may be surmised what the focus of knowledge in the near future will be.

Some new trends are already visible. The most obvious trend is lamentation on the present madness of man. Man is running either after wealth or status or salvation. This sectarian approach cannot satisfy the whole man. Inspite of astounding success in a particular limited field, man remains unhappy. The scientists, the capitalists, the philosophers, the saints and many others can be legitimately proud of their success in their special limited field of activity. But on the whole, they remain unsatisfied because in pursuit of a single aim, they have grossly neglected other equally important aspects of life. Wealth alone, or scholarship alone or spirituality alone cannot satisfy the whole man. They feel swollen from outside but hollow from inside. They feel a vacuum inside them. They detest what they have and pine for what they don't have. This is the tragic state of Man today. An unhappy Man, A suffering Man.

The same is the case with ideologies – there are capitalists and communists; there are fundamentalists and rationalists, there are pacifists and war-mongers. But all of them have only half the truth with them and not the whole truth. They also know it but they have no option because there is a lure for extremism only. There is no place for moderates and liberals. Extremism sells, it gives an identity, a belongingness. It whips up emotions. It strengthens the entrenched vested interests. But it is not just, it is not reasonable, it is not moral

or religious, but still it is there.

The just, the reasonable, the moral, the religious and the spiritual- although in majority, they are God fearing, they are peace loving, they believe in the retributive justice of God but they are passive. Time has come when the scholars are realising the dangers of such extremism. The future knowledge shall emphasise justice, fair play, welfare of the common man, peace, prosperity and progress. In future, extremism will have no place, vested interests shall have no place and every one will be able to live with honour and dignity. Such knowledge will be humane knowledge.

All intellectuals are well aware of this anomalous situation of man today and they are focusing their attention on the same. But there is no solution in sight as yet. Discretion in choice, moderation in enjoyment of sensory pleasures and balance in the physical, psychological, social and spiritual aspects of life are considered to be viable solutions. But it has not been possible to spell out an integrated philosophy of life based on just ideas, much less working out details of such a style of life. It is hoped that future knowledge will be created keeping these ideas in view. But all that is in the womb of future.

F. How to face problems of knowledge?

How to proceed when we need true information or knowledge to solve some problem? If the information available to us is wrong or inadequate, we cannot use it. So, one has to be careful in using the available information. Regarding knowledge, it is said that an information is true knowledge only if :-

a. It conforms to real life situation and does not contradict it.
b. It is relevant to the problem in hand.
c. It is practicable.
d. It appeals to common sense.
e. It will achieve the aim in view.
f. It is useful.

Only then that information should be considered as true knowledge and valid for use. But the main difficulty is that it is not easy to test the validity of a statement. However, there are some useful suggestions.

Lord Buddha gives us a thumb rule to test the validity of a knowledge statement. He says : "Do not believe what you have heard; do not believe in traditions simply because they have been handed down for generations; do not believe in anything because it is rumoured and spoken of by many; do not believe because it is the statement of some old sage; do not believe in conjectures; do not believe in that to which you have become attached by habit; do not believe merely on the authority of your teacher or elder. Accept a statement after observation and analysis and when it agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all."

But it is easier said than done because different sources of information– scriptures, authoritative texts, scholars, experts, leaders of society, news papers, elders, friends and others speak in different words which are many times conflicting and contradictory. One is not sure which one to accept and which one to reject. Under such circumstances one may proceed as under :–

a. If the information, proposition or statement relates to physical world or natural phenomena, accept only that which has been accepted by physical and biological sciences as true. Do not accept anything which runs counter to the accredited theories and laws of modern sciences.

b. If the information, proposition or statement relates to social life, natural social relationships and day to day worldly affairs, accept in order of preference that which helps you to achieve the following aims :

i. Expression and satisfaction of your natural urges upto a moderate level.

ii. Fulfilment of your ordained duties and obligations towards yourself and your family.

iii. Harmony among members of your immediate relationship.

iv. Attainment of prosperity, name and fame.

v. Ignore all other information as irrelevant and not useful or within your purpose and control. There are no other absolute truths in social life except the divine laws.

c. If an information, proposition or statement relates to your personal life – your health, your development, your profession, your

well-being and your peace of mind, accept that in order of preference which helps you to achieve the following aims :

i. Health, growth, development and operational efficiency of your physiological equipment and physiological systems.

ii. Enjoyment of pleasures of senses upto a moderate level.

iii. Balanced development of all the four aspects of your life– physical, psychological, social and spiritual.

iv. Ignore all other information as irrelevant and not within your purpose and control.

d. If an information, proposition or statement relates of God, faith, salvation, aims of life, morality, social ethics etc., do not allow yourself to be swayed and strayed away by any social tradition, religious dogma, holy person etc. Meditate and communicate with your own inner self and do what your inner voice or intuition says. Follow your intuition. This divine mind is the best guide because it follows the divine law alone and nothing else. Ignore all others. Lord Krishna also advises, "Do what you feel best." (XVIII.66)

If an information, proposition or statement relates to anything other than the above, exercise your own discretion and good judgement with confidence and conviction. Ignore all information, propositions and statements which are not within your purpose and control. They are irrelevant. You are not expected to be an encyclopaedia and know about everything under the sun.

G. How to acquire true knowledge?

A vast quantum of knowledge has been created over the centuries and particularly during the last 200 years. Today, it is impossible for any person to acquire even a fraction of the total quantum of knowledge. This knowledge has been created by three different groups as under :

a. Scientists

Scientists are concerned with the natural elements and natural forces operating in the world. They study the changes in the location and condition of physical entities as a result of their interaction with forces of nature. Their method is investigation through perception with the help of sensory organs and mechanical aid, chemical reactions etc. This has resulted in the discovery of large number of

laws of nature. Such knowledge can easily be retested and validated. It conforms to reality, is consistent, relevant and useful. So, such knowledge can be taken as true knowledge. It may be trusted and used with confidence.

b. Philosophers

In very ancient times and in recent times also, the philosophers have created lot of knowledge. Their field of enquiry starts where the field of enquiry of scientists ends. They are concerned with concepts, ideas, feelings, emotions and their inter-relationships. They also deal with relevance of such ideas etc. for man, society and their welfare. Their method of investigation involves observation, visualisation, imagination, speculation, reasoning, inference, deductive and inductive logic and conclusion. The knowledge thus created relates to a particular place, time, society and circumstances. So this knowledge is relative and not universal. In another situation, it may or may not hold good. Therefore, it cannot be called true knowledge as such. It must be tested and verified with reference to the circumstances where we wish to apply it. If it conforms to reality, it is relevant, consistent and useful to our circumstances, only then, it should be used. Otherwise, it should be considered as an opinion and before use, it should be suitably modified.

c. Saints

The scientists deal with natural objects and the philosophers deal with subtle concepts and ideas relating to man and society but the saints deal with still more subtle entities which have simply existence but in no way related to worldly affairs and have no dimensions. Their method of investigation is meditation and upgradation of their own consciousness. They do not depend on perception or even mental processes. They totally rely on revelation and realisation. Their intuition is the only instrument used in the process. So it is purely a personal experience which may or may not be true. Such intuitional knowledge can neither be called as true nor as untrue. It is of course true for the person who has realised it. For others, it is just a matter of faith. He may consider it as true or he may consider it as untrue.

Knowledge about God, heaven, hell, transmigration, purpose of life etc. belong to this category. Under such circumstances, if on

serious consideration, it appears to be probable, and initiated by a really saintly person, one may tentatively take it to be true, and test it against the divine laws, natural laws of universe and intrinsic nature of man. If the intuitional knowledge is in accord with such laws, laws it may be used with caution. Further consideration should depend on the outcome of its use.

For example, human sacrifice to achieve some purpose or doubling of money through magic or grace etc. are simply false knowledge and should never be relied upon. In any case, such intuitional knowledge should better be ignored and not used as true knowledge. If someone uses such knowledge, he may do so with open eyes and at his own risk and responsibility.

Summary

1. True knowledge serves as a reliable base for valid and useful decisions. Such knowledge leads to right actions, success and happiness.

2. Man is endowed with adequate equipment in the form of sense organs, mind, intellect, ego and intuition for the acquisition of such true knowledge as may be necessary for him to face his day-to-day life situations.

3. For that, man must develop his latent potential abilities and avail the opportunities provided by the society for his education, training and development.

4. Man should not restrict himself to traditional wisdom only but equip himself with such information from latest scientific discoveries, authoritative sources and other means before taking any decision in his special circumstances.

Questions

1. What are the sources of information from where you obtain reliable knowledge?
2. In case of conflicting information on a subject how do you identify true information?
3. Whom do you consult for advice in case of difficulty?
4. Which scripture do you consider most true to your heart?

VIII. Suffering - Causes and Remedies

A. Introduction

The main themes of most Indian scriptures - Hindu, Jain, Buddhist etc. are (a) the acceptance of the obvious fact of suffering, (b) the causes of suffering, (c) the ways to get rid of suffering and (d) the attainment of happiness. Gita also begins with the description of the suffering mind of Arjun and concludes with the detailed description of the ways to end this suffering. The Lord says, "O son of Kunti, the ideas of heat and cold, pleasure and pain are produced by the contact of the senses with their objects. Such ideas are limited by a beginning and an end. They are transitory. O descendant of Bharat! Bear them with patience." (II.14) Again he says, "For the uncontrolled, there is no wisdom; nor for the uncontrolled, there is power of concentration and for a man without concentration, there is no peace; and for the unpeaceful, how can there be happiness!" (II.66). Thus suffering of man and getting rid of suffering are the main aims and the central theme of the Gita.

B. Meaning of suffering :

Pain or pleasure are feelings experienced by the body, mind, intellect and the ego as a consequence of contact and interaction with the outside world. The scriptures define pleasure as "अनुकूल वेदना इति सुखम्" i.e. "An experience in conformity with expectations is pleasure." Similarly pain is defined as "प्रतिकूल वेदना इति दुःखम्" i.e. "An experience contrary to expectations is pain." Expectation is a mental phenomena conditioned by previous experiences in life. If the outcome of an interaction is as expected by us, it is termed as pleasure. If the outcome is contrary to our expectations, it is termed as pain.

Another definition of pleasure and pain is as under :-

"A mental experience consistent, helpful and compatible with the systems and processes of the body and mind is pleasure. A mental experience inconsistent, harmful and incompatible with the systems and processes of the body and mind is pain."

Both the definitions clearly state that :

a. Both pleasure and pain are outcome of mental experiences of

the individual.

b. They relate to systems and processes of the body and mind as a consequence of interactions with worldly objects, persons or events.

c. They are of a transitory nature.

d. Their intensity depends upon the nature of similar previous experiences.

C. Psychology of pain and pleasure

All reactions of contact between the nerve endings of the body organs and the worldly objects are received in the form of vibrations. The nerve endings convert them into sensations and transmit them to the respective sensory nerve centres in the brain. The mind co-ordinates the sensations received from different sense organs and convert them into perceptual images. These perceptual images are interpreted by the intellect into concepts and later changed by the mind into meaning and feelings on the basis of similar previous experiences. The ego passes its judgement on the feelings as pleasure or pain on the basis of its own pre-conceived likes and dislikes. Consequently, the body, the mind the intellect and the ego have an experience of pleasure or pain accordingly.

Thus consciousness of pleasure or pain, either physical or mental is primarily a mental phenomena and is created by the Ego. If consciousness is delinked from the feelings, the pleasure and pain will not be felt. On the other hand if consciousness is linked to even imaginary feelings of pleasure and pain, they will also result in comfort or hurt as happens from dream- borne pleasure and pain. More sensitive minds feel greater pleasure and pain. Similarly, people with strong likes and dislikes feel more elated or hurt. Emotional persons may be hurt even by pain aroused by imagination. A well trained and controlled mind suffers less pain and for a shorter period. Similarly, non-conditioned minds as is the case with children, tribal or wild animals suffer less. De-conditioned, detached or concentrated minds suffer less and that too for a shorter period.

D. Kinds of suffering.

There are four aspects of the life of an individual and each aspect can have its own suffering :–

a. Physical Aspect – It suffers from physical sufferings. Ailments of the body, accidents, natural calamities etc. cause physical sufferings. Ailments of the body result from wrong intake, wrong living habits and environmental disorders. Physical suffering can be got rid of by taking the following steps :–

i. Living in peaceful, healthy, pollution free environment and by reducing the existing pollution to the extent possible.
ii. Taking balanced and nutritious diet.
iii. Healthy living habits.
iv. Medication.
v. Observing due precautions against change of season, weather and other changes in natural surroundings.

Nature has endowed us with a *homeostasis* system and autonomous nervous system which take care of the physical aspect of our life. We should also take immediate notice of any ailment or difficulty and take remedial measures.

b. Psychological Aspect – It relates to mental suffering. Mental equipment of man consists of mind, intellect, ego and unconscious. If there are aberrations in the smooth functioning of any of these four, mental suffering appears.

i. **Mind** performs the functions of co-ordination and communication of messages from the sensory centres to the intellect and from the intellect to the motor organs. Mind also deals with desires and emotions. Mind helps in perception and cognition. So mind is the most important organ and the most powerful operational agency in the body. Co-ordination and communication of messages is a routine function. But handling and dealing with desires and emotions is a very tricky business. Mind may generate too many desires and unrealistic desires much beyond the available capacity and resources to satisfy them. Their non-fulfilment will lead to mental suffering. Also, impelled by emotions, man may indulge in enjoyment of sensory pleasures much beyond his capacity or reasonable limit leading to suffering. Mind always demands more and more pleasure of the senses. An uncontrolled mind becomes the master of the Self and drags man in dangerous situations causing untold suffering. Thus mind can become the worst

enemy of man.

ii. **Intellect** processes the messages transmitted by mind, performs the intellection functions namely analysis, verifying data, drawing out meaning from a given situation and decision making. Meaning and decision form the basis for consequent action by man. If the meaning or conclusion is wrong, the action is sure to be wrong leading to disastrous results and suffering. Only a healthy and sharp intellect can arrive at correct decisions and avoid suffering. A weak intellect, a fatigued intellect, a dull intellect, an untrained intellect or a defiled intellect remains confused and incapable of arriving at correct decisions. The intellect of Arjun was confused and it arrived at a wrong conclusion at the crucial moment causing so much of suffering.

iii. **Ego**. An inflated ego or a self-centered ego takes an unrealistic view of the situation and expects too much from others. Also, a narcissistic ego expects too much pampering from others which it cannot get. Consequently, such an ego faces disappointment, failure and frustration. All this leads to avoidable suffering.

iv. **Unconscious**. Unconscious is the store house of past sanskars or subtle end-results of all our actions. If the actions in the past had been de-meritorious or vicious, their end-results with negativity are locked in the unconscious which continue to exert pressure on the self and cause untold suffering. This constitutes the Karmic Baggage of the individual. Negative Karmic Baggage is the cause of suffering as it prompts man to take vicious actions.

Freud was the first modern psychologist to draw attention to the concept of "Unconscious" and its role in mental suffering. While treating mental patients and their abnormal behaviour, he came to the conclusion that past unhappy events locked in the unconscious caused untold mental suffering. Once this pent up energy is released and the individual gets rid of his past unhappy memories, he feels greatly relieved.

These are the causes of mental suffering located in the psychological apparatus of the Self. We shall deal with their solution in subsequent sections.

c. Social Aspect – Social aspect of man is concerned with his social aspirations and natural urges. Natural urges of social man are self-esteem, assertion, identity and expression. His social aspirations are to enjoy social status, name, fame, prosperity and progeny. There is nothing wrong in the manifestation of these natural urges and trying to attain these social aspirations. But in this case, there are two difficulties which cause suffering. The first is that man is not satisfied in having these things according to his need. His greed prompts him to have more and more of them without any reasonable limit. Naturally, it is not possible beyond a point. Man is not ready to accept this limitation. His continued insistence on more and more meets with failure, frustration and suffering. The second difficulty is that stung by jealousy and hate, he wants to have more than what his neighbour has got. The cause of his suffering is the greater prosperity of his neighbour. He envies him which sometimes takes the form of hatred. His cravings for more become the cause of his sufferings. These are self inflicted sufferings of man. He has to understand this clearly. He must observe moderation and avoid craving.

d. Spiritual Aspect – It is concerned with bliss, wisdom and love. If a man remains devoid of these three attributes of God, he remains alienated, lonely in the crowd and deprived in abundance. He feels an emptiness and vacuum in his life. Some persons try to fill up this emptiness with cheap or vicious entertainment or with alcohol or with drugs or with intoxicating vanity or crime. But these remedies are worse than the disease. All this leads to untold suffering, frustration and humiliation. The remedy lies in surrender to God and observing his commandments.

E. Philosophy of Karmic Baggage or the Law of Karma.

a. **What is Karmic Baggage.** Most of our desires are aimed at the four natural aspirations as under :–

i. Dharma– Righteousness, fulfilment of ordained duities.

ii. Arth– Wealth, property and other resources of satisfaction of sensory pleasures.

iii. Kaam– Satisfaction of desires relating to senses and social aspirations e.g. name, fame, status, power, creativity in the form of art, literature etc.

iv. Moksha– getting rid of suffering of all kinds for ever. It is believed that wiping out the Karmic Baggage leads to Moksha.

Normally, every action involves more than one of the above components. These components can be accompanied by any one of the following two types of emotions or mental tendencies :–

i. Virtuous mental tendencies born of the three attributes of God namely– Bliss, Wisdom and Love.

ii. Vicious mental tendencies born of the opposite of the above.

The normal human desires when combined with virtuous mental tendencies, give rise to virtuous actions or Dharma and when combined with vicious mental tendencies, give rise to vicious actions or Adharma. Both Dharma as well as Adharma produce some end-results of their own which is known as the Karmic Baggage.

b. Kinds of Karmic Baggage.

Karmic Baggage of an individual is the cumulative stock of the end-results of all his actions– virtuous as well as vicious. It consists of two parts depending upon the nature of thoughts, emotions, intentions and the mental tendencies which prompt such actions. These two parts are as under :–

a. Positive Karmic Baggage.

b. Negative Karmic Baggage.

c. Operation of Karmic Baggage.

Both the kinds of Karmic Baggage have their own quality, energy, vibration, and force. (Swami Shivananda– Thought Power, page : 10-11). Both bind the individual to the world and its objects. Both continue to exist in the unconscious of the individual. As and when appropriate circumstances in the life of an individual arise analogous to an element of the Karmic Baggage in the unconscious, that element gets activated and enlivened and exerts pressure to manifest itself and influence the circumstances. This manifestation appears

through the mind and colours the whole situation accordingly. This is how the Karmic Baggage affects the life of an individual.

The Negative elements of the Karmic Baggage affect the individual in the following manner and are the cause of suffering :–

i. They generate negative feelings, emotions and ideas.

ii. They adversely affect the endocrine system which produce toxic secretions.

iii. They limit the powers and potentialities of the mind.

iv. They adversely affect the physiological operational systems of the individual.

v. They obstruct comprehension and obscure reality.

vi. They obstruct contact with the Divine Mind of the individual.

vii. They radiate through the aura of the individual and adversely affect his relationship with other individuals.

viii. They produce dreams which are full of violence, painful experiences, worries and anxiety.

ix. They prompt an individual towards dullness, inactivity or negativity resulting in vicious actions.

The positive elements of the Karmic Baggage affect the individual in just the opposite manner and prompt an individual towards activity, positive thinking and virtuous actions and are the cause of happiness.

d. Social Karmic Baggage.

Cumulative Karmic Baggage of individual members constitutes collective unconscious of that group called the social Karmic Baggage of that group. All beliefs, institutions, ideas, thoughts, traditions, customs etc. of the individual members of the group are accordingly coloured with that social Karmic Baggage. Thus the Karmic Baggage of the individual is affected by the Karmic Baggage of the other individuals whose company he seeks.

This part of the Karmic Baggage can be modified through the social influences and the volitional influences stated under sections of the chapter on Man.

It is believed that Karmic Baggage constitutes the Subtle Body and

is eternal. It migrates from one life to another after death.

F. Causes of suffering

Following are the main causes of the suffering of man :–

a. Inadequate attention to the development of the four aspect of life during the early formative period in the first phase of life upto 25 years of age.

b. Inadequate or wrong knowledge about the universe, man and society.

c. Inadequate attention to the development of virtuous mental tendencies and desirable habits.

d. Non observance of balance in the four aspects of life.

e. Non observance of moderation in the enjoyment of pleasures of the senses.

f. Non performance of ordained duties.

g. Inadequate attention to the effect of advancing age on life-style. Attachment and egoism should be replaced by renunciation and altruism.

h. Forgetting God and his commandments.

G. How to get rid of suffering?

Different religions and philosophies have prescribed different remedies to get rid of all such sufferings. Bible has prescribed the ten commandments of God. Islam has stated the five great obligations. Buddhism has mentioned the Ashtangika Marg. Vedic Rishis have prescribed yoga and yajna as the panacea for all sufferings. The Gita mentions surrender to the Lord as one of the ways to end suffering. All these prescriptions can be covered under the two steps of yoga and yajna. We shall deal with these two steps in subsequent chapters.

H. Laws of Happy Living

Suffering and happiness in life are not chance events or mystical happenings. They are the outcome of a series of events culminating in such a situation. They are the results of definite causes following definite universal and eternal laws of nature like the law relating to Matter-stuff. These laws relate to Mind-stuff and have been discovered by saints and philosophers through meditation,

visualisation and conceptualisation. Later, they were articulated and communicated for the benefit of mankind. Remnants of these laws are scattered in scriptures of all religions in one form or the other. They are universal, eternal and infallible like the laws of natural sciences applicable to matter and energy. They have just been identified, pieced together, articulated and stated for the benefit of individuals who wish to get rid of suffering and attain happiness. These laws are as under :–

1. **Law of Acceptance.** Individuals are born different and in different physical and social circumstances. Some are born healthy and strong. Others are born sick and weak. Some are born in western countries, others are born in eastern countries. Some are born to rich parents. Others are born to poor parents. Some are born in capital cities. Others are born in remote habitations. Such differences are too numerous. What is the reason or justification for such widely different situations which gives a big advantage to some while places others to great disadvantages. On the basis of present knowledge, there are no convincing answers. Some say it is the discretion of God– the master of the universe. Others say it is random selection by nature. Some others say, it is chance; yet others say, it is the outcome of actions of past lives. At best, all these explanations are wild guesses. Any answer is as good as the other.

At birth, an infant is not conscious and aware of all these differences. He is taken care of and brought up by the parents. When an individual crosses the stage of childhood, he gradually becomes aware of his physical and social circumstances. During adolescence, when he starts taking charge of his life and asserts to lead his life in accordance with his own wishes, he realises these differences and sometimes seeks justifications for his predicament. But there are no convincing answers to all such queries.

The best course open to an individual is to accept with gratitude and humility his present status as a given reality and start from there onwards. Every situation has its plus and minus points if viewed from an objective and comprehensive angle. The individual should accept his position, assess his strengths and weaknesses, explore the various possibilities, chart out his course of action and proceed further with courage and conviction. This course alone will lead to

happiness. There is no use complaining or cursing God, society, destiny or any one else. All other options will lead to suffering.

Not only should an individual accept himself, but should also accept his total physical and social situation- his country, his religion, his culture, his parents, his social status, etc. and proceed from there on the road to life. Even in later life, if such questions crop up in mind, they are not to be allowed to discourage or depress because there is no other alternative but to accept the reality and move forward. What cannot be cured has to be endured.

2. Law of Potentiality. Every individual has been endowed with physical equipment, physiological systems, psychological apparatus and psychological systems which have great potentiality of development. This body of ours is a treasure house with precious assets which can be developed to an unimaginable extent. Sense organs, motor organs, brain, heart, life-breath, mind, intellect, ego, unconscious, intuition etc. are great assets which are precious possessions of every individual. All these have great potential. Energy level and physical capacity can be increased many fold. Mind can be developed from passionate level to restrained level. Intellect can be developed from vacillating level to the level of Ritambhara Buddhi. Ego can be expanded from egoism to altruistic level. The unconscious can be cleared of its Karmic Baggage and purified. An individual must know that he has these great assets with unlimited potentiality. This realisation is the second law of happiness. Ignorance of this law will naturally lead to suffering.

3. Law of Abundance. If the present level of one's assets is low, there is nothing to worry. We are living in an ocean of abundance with unlimited reserves of life-force, material energy, five elements, diverse qualities, all types of thoughts, ideas, feelings, emotions, sensations etc. All these are freely available to us so easily and so abundantly. One can draw from these reserves as much as necessary without any restriction. Every one has unlimited right to this cosmic wealth. One must know this and be optimistic to develop his potentialities upto the optimum by drawing from such abundance as much as possible. Such knowledge and consequent effort will definitely lead to happiness. This is the third universal law of happiness.

4. Law of Attraction. In genetics, there is a law that like begets like. On the same lines, there is a law in the science of life that from the ocean of abundance all around us, only such elements shall be attracted towards an individual as are already active inside him. If an individual is weak in health, harmful germ from the environment will get attracted towards him and he will be a prey to them. If an individual is entertaining evil thoughts in his mimd, a swarm of evil thoughts from the enveloping environment will get attracted towards him and he will be filled with an army of evil thoughts, so, also about feelings and emotions. It is a known fact that evil or vicious mental tendencies lead to suffering and virtuous mental tendencies lead to happiness. So the fourth law of happiness states that as under :–

a. Like begets like.
b. All that we are is the result of what we had thought.
c. Whatever we give to others, we will receive it back in full measure.
d. If a person speaks or entertains an evil thought, pain follows him. If a person speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him.

Therefore the law wants an individual to give up negative, destructive and harmful thoughts, feelings, emotions, actions etc. One should purify himself of all evil thoughts and imbibe positive, constructive and beneficial ideas, thoughts, feelings, emotions, sensations and actions. That will definitely lead to happiness.

5. Law of Volitional Creativity. Man is endowed with volition and free-will. He can take initiative for any action in accordance with his own choice. This freedom is not available to animals and other lower living beings. Only human beings have this free-will and volition. This choice should be used intelligently. The choices may be made consciously or unconsciously. Unconscious choices result in weak actions. Also such choices may be positive and beneficial or negative and harmful. Conscious choices are expected to be positive and powerful and with a definite purpose. If such positive and beneficial conscious choices are made with intense emotions, they result in creativity. The law of volitional creativity states that conscious positive actions lead to happiness and unconscious or

conscious negative actions lead to suffering. Also greater the emotional energy invested in such actions, greater the effect.

Such creative actions are often in two directions. One for the development of one's potentialities and two for the performance of one's ordained duties. They will surely result in happiness. Hence an individual must undertake volitional initiative for development of his potentialities and for performance of his ordained duties. Also such actions should be detached actions. They will result in attainment of happiness.

6. Law of Moderation. It is frequently asserted that too much of everything is bad, however beneficial it may appear to be. Similarly, too little of anything is inadequate and not of much avail. Devoting too much time, money, energy or other resources to any one specific item will be wasteful and may even lead to suffering. Moderation and restraint always lead to best results and happiness. This is more so in the enjoyment of pleasures of the senses. Lord Buddha called it the "Middle Path." This is the point of optimum utility. The law states– "Moderation leads to happiness. Indulgence or renunciation leads to suffering."

7. Law of Balance or Equilibrium. Life is not a linear phenomena. It is to expand in all directions. It is multi-dimensional and multi-faceted. Life has different aspects– physical, psychological, social and spiritual. It has several urges, social aspirations etc. All the aspects must be attended to and a balance need to be maintained in different aspects. Parents, spouse, children, and self- all are of equal importance. All parts of the body need to the healthy and strong. They are inter-related and interdependent. Attention to all and a balance among all will lead to happiness. Neglect of anyone or too much attention to some will lead to suffering.

8. Law of Faith. There is a difference between awareness and belief. There is also a difference between belief and faith. Awareness means knowledge about a phenomena. A statement becomes a belief when it acquires some credibility but not a conviction. When a belief has been tested and found valid even on close scrutiny, it acquires the status of faith. Faith is a conviction which requires no further proof. It is infused with higher emotions and pursued with will-power. It forms the foundation of volitional action. Faith is free of

indecision, vacillation, mental trembling and restlessness. The law states– "Faith leads to happiness, vacillation leads to suffering." It is of course important what you believe, but it is of greater importance how firmly you believe.

9. **Law of Retributive Justice.** The law states– "Goodness and virtue lead to happiness. Evil and vice lead to suffering." The result of good thoughts, emotions, feelings, utterances and actions is good. The consequence of evil thoughts, feelings, utterances and actions is bad. Faith in this law and its observance leads to happiness. This is the law of retributive justice.

10. **Law of Unity.** All the laws of happiness form one unit. They operate together in unison. It is the observance of all the nine laws that leads to happiness. Neglect of any one will defeat the whole purpose of life. So all the laws of happiness must always be kept in mind and obeyed for a happy life.

Summary

1. Suffering is a curse in life. It may be on account of the following reasons :–

   a. Negative Karmic Baggage

   b. Vicious mental tendencies

   c. Undesirable habits

   d. Wrong life-style

2. Other reasons for suffering can be:

   a. Non-development of potential abilities.

   b. Non-performance of ordained duties.

   c. Uncontrolled enjoyment of pleasures of the senses

   d. Imbalance in the four aspects of life.

   e. Non-performances of yoga

   f. Ignorance

   g. Unregulated, indisciplined and egoistic life-style.

3. One can get rid of his suffering by taking suitable corrective steps to remove the causes of suffering. It is the bounden duty of man to get rid of his suffering and attain happiness.

Questions

1. Do you suffer from any anxiety or worry? State one or two such worries?
2. What in your opinion is the root cause of these worries?
3. What are you doing to get rid of your worries ? Mention two or three such steps.
4. "In most cases, we ourselves are the root cause of over worries." Do you agree with this statement? Support your answer with some evidence.
5. Do you agree with the statement– "Destiny of every man is engraved on his forehead?" Give reasons.

Part-V

Road to Happiness and Art of Happy Living

I. Nishkam Karma or Detached Action

A. Ordained Obligations

Man always lives in a social situation and normally in a family with a number of members. He interacts with the members of the family in his day-to- day life. He expects them to help him. So also, they expect him to help them. These mutual expectations constitute our duties or obligations. We have other relatives, neighbours and friends as well. We are related to them also but to a lesser extent. We have duties or obligations towards them also but to a lesser extent. Similarly, we are citizens of a State. The State protects us and provides us a number of facilities. In return, we have some duties towards the State. Most of all, we have some obligations towards our ownselves also. All these obligations have been imposed on us by necessity, convention, custom, tradition, law etc. These obligations or duties are called Ordained duties or Ordained obligations. Fulfilment of these obligations is very much expected by the society. These obligations must necessarily be fulfilled.

B. Action is preferable to inaction

Some philosophers are of the view that entanglement in the affairs of the world is not good as it leads to suffering. Hence Sanyas or renunciation from the worldly affairs is the best course open to man. But this is patently wrong. We cannot renounce the world. Ordained duties must be performed otherwise even life will become impossible. We should not refuse to perform necessary actions. Action is better than inaction. What is required is performance of actions with a detached mind.

We must know what are our obligations. Some of these may be pleasurable; some may be boring, some may involve hard work or even unpleasant work. But all obligations should be performed pleasantly as a part of duty and not because of the consequent pleasant outcome or any other consideration. We must know our duty as an individual, as a student, as a member of the family, as a son or daughter,

as a brother or sister, as a friend, as a neighbour, as a member of the society and as a citizen of the State. We must perform these duties willingly and never neglect them. If this is not done, society will go to dogs and we shall be nowhere. Obviously, these duties differ from person to person, place to place and time to time. But whatever may be the duties at a particular time, must be performed.

C. Actions without egoism

Ordained duties are a social obligation. They are not to be prompted as a personal agenda, selfish act or impelled by vanity to boost one's ego, but as a sacred duty in fulfilment of one's ordained duties. If an action is undertaken as a personal venture to earn wealth, name or fame, its success will lead to more vanity and arrogance. But if it fails, it will result in great disappointment, frustration and humiliation. In both cases, man degenerates himself. Therefore, while performing an action, one should do it with a detached attitude and as a sacred duty in fulfilment of his ordained obligations. It must be performed with a concentrated mind and to the best of one's capacity. That way, he will neither be unduly elated nor utterly dismayed. He will have the satisfaction to have performed his duty.

D. Perfection in action

Actions are to be performed with concentrated mind, full effort and seriously. They are not to be performed carelessly, hurriedly or non-seriously. Perfection in action alone will result in the expected outcome. Action performed in an improper manner or half-heartedly or performed at an inappropriate time is as good as not performed at all and it will fail to achieve anything. Only an efficiently performed action is an action really performed.

E. Detached action

A detached action is an action which does not insist on the achievement of some pre-meditated results of selfish nature. Of course, we always have some aim, purpose or objective while performing any action. But at any particular time, attention is to be concentrated on the work in hand at that time and not on the anticipated outcome of the whole venture. This is necessary otherwise also. Every action is performed in a social situation in which a number of factors and a number of persons are involved.

The outcome of the action will depend upon the cumulative result of the effort of all such persons and contribuntion of each factor involved in the interaction. The result will not depend on our effort alone. Hence to insist on getting the desired result according to our expectation is not realistic or reasonable. Therefore, we should not expect a particular outcome of an action as originally planned by us. We should always be prepared to accept whatever result comes out with a cool and composed mind. Such an action performed with this detached attitude of mind is called Detached Action.

F. Sub-actions of an action are equally important

Every action involves a number of sub-actions. The end result of an action will depend upon the cumulative result of all the linked sub-actions in the chain. So every sub-action must be performed with equal attention and efficiency so as to culminate in the desired result of the whole action. At every step, the aim of the sub-action alone should be kept in mind and not the aim of the total action. If one keeps his eye all the time on the end-result of the entire action, while neglecting due attention to the sub-action at hand at that moment, the end result is bound to be disastrous and disappointing. The maximum strength of the chain lies in the weakest link. The end result is always in accordance with the action not well performed.

Therefore, due attention is to be paid to each and every sub-action in the chain. Only then our action can be expected to produce the desired result. It is better to forget the desired end-result of the action during the intervening period. Hence the Gita lays great emphasis on concentration of mind on the sub-action in hand at that moment and not to get distracted by contemplating about the end result of the total action all the time. That will serve only as a distraction. An action performed with such detached attitude of mind is called detached action. Detached action is the most important teaching of the Gita.

G. Illustrations of detached action

Suppose there is a match between two teams. You are playing in one of the teams. Let us also suppose you fix up your mind in the very beginning to win the match. If it is so, all the time, you will be thinking of winning the match. This will serve as a distraction. Very often, you are likely to lose the ball. Whenever you lose the ball,

you will feel disappointed. Repeated disappointments haunted by fear of losing the match will frustrate you and you will lose your cool. You are likely to get agitated, resort to foul playing and determined to win at any cost by hook or by crook. The consequences of such an attitude can easily be anticipated. Your action in decidedly not a detached action.

Let us suppose you have to appear in the Board Examination which is six months away. You set your target to improve your pass percentage from 70% to 80%. There are 180 days to go for the examination. You visualise that an improvement of 10% marks involves, studying all the subjects more thoroughly, working on each day for at least six hours devoting one hour to each subject, attending classes regularly, reading text books, doing homework, writing assignments etc. You then prepare a schedule of work and execute the same sincerely. Thus you have divided your action into a number of sub-actions and you perform each sub-action with utmost care and concentrated mind. With the passing of each day, you will feel more and more confident. The end result of such an effort can easily be anticipated. This is an example of detached action.

If another student, sets the same target but does not work out the details accordingly, he will be thinking of approaching the paper-setter and the examiner, somehow to get a copy of the question paper in advance, use unfair means in the examination etc. The end result of such an action can also be easily anticipated. This is an example of undetached action or wishful action.

H. What is Nishkam Karma or Detached Action?

Nishkam Karma is that action which has the following ingredients –

a. An action which forms part of ordained duties.

b. An action performed without egoistic attitude.

c. An action of which every sub-action has been performed efficiently with due attention and concentrated mind.

d. An action performed without expecting any pre-meditated results.

e. An action performed as a sacred duty for the well-being of the self and for the welfare of the society.

Detachment does not mean moving away from the worldly affairs or not taking interest in worldly affairs, or being indifferent to happenings around us. Detachment means moving away from selfishness, egoism, self-love or narcissism. Detached actions are those actions in which selfish motive or self gratification is not the only aim. Detached action involves taking interest in others and looking to the welfare of others. Detachment does not mean inaction, renunciation, self-decoration, self-enjoyment, self-indulgence and self-aggrandisement. But always be intent and engaged in actions of self-improvement, performance of ordained duties, professional excellence, social welfare and altruistic pursuits.

I. Psychology of Nishkam Karma

It is very obvious that action is better than inaction. Without action, even life will not continue. But it is difficult to understand how any action can be undertaken without some aim in view or without expecting any result from our action. This is a very subtle point and needs to be understood clearly.

Normally, an action involves the following stages :–

a) Some need or stimulus from outside environment like heat, cold, danger to life. It draws our attention for appropriate response. It could be some natural urge from within which may prompt action viz. hunger, fatigue or fear. It could be some social aspiration. It could also be some past event coming to memory and agitating for manifestation. So, all actions are in response to some stimulus from the environment or from inside the body or from mind, ego, unconscious.

b) The second stage involves some internal process like perception, conception, intellection, assessment and drawing some conclusion regarding an appropriate action in response to the stimulus. This is internal chattering or mental brooding.

c) The third stage is the actual action itself which may involve a number of sub-actions over a period of time. During this period, the individual is busy performing or doing something either mentally or physically or in both ways.

d) The fourth stage starts after the completion of the action or sub-action when we are waiting for the result. This period may be very short or long. Sometimes, the result is before us immediately and we know the outcome. Sometimes, there is an interval between the completion of the action and the outcome of the result. This is a period of suspense and expectation.

e) The fifth stage starts after the results. The result can be either positive or negative or partly positive and partly negative. Whatever the result, it sinks into us and leads to either elation and happiness or depression and pain depending upon the expectations and the outcome. Whatever the outcome, it has a hangover of its own which may linger on for some period or for a long period. If the result lingers on for long, it may lead to brooding which will lead to vanity and arrogance in the case of elation and anxiety and suffering in the case of depression. This lingering of bondage between the Self and the result of the action is the cause of suffering of man and about which the Gita speaks. This bondage or aftermath should not be there. Everything should end with the outcome of the result, whatever the result. This is the whole point to be understood, practised and followed in life. This is what is meant by detached action or action without expecting any result. No hang-over. No aftermath. No bondage. No suffering.

f) Why does the aftermath linger on? Perhaps because of failure? But it may occur even after success. The actual reasons are "results beyond expectation" and future apprehension. Unexpected failure or unexpected success both lead to hangover, aftermath and bondage. Therefore, no expected or premeditated results of actions should be contemplated. That way, the actions will become detached actions.

But let us consider, why such hangover? These hangovers linger on because of a guilt feeling, which may be on account of one or more of the following reasons :–

a. We may be ignorant or unaware of our ordained duties and thus get caught unaware of our duty and hence unprepared to meet the situation confidently and successfully leading to difficulty and disaster.

b. We may have been aware of the duty but had not prepared ourselves adequately to meet the situation. This physical, mental, technological, financial or other deficiency on our part might have been the cause of our failure leading to lamentation and self-pity or self-condemnation.

c. Our assessment of the situation may not have been realistic and pragmatic resulting in wrong strategy and wrong approach to meet the situation and consequently leading to failure.

d. We might have been over confident, non-serious or careless in our effort while performing the action resulting in failure and to have the expected result. Carelessness and sluggishness often lead to disappointment.

e. We may not be having enough will-power or self confidence or faith in our own-self in successfully meeting the situation on hand. Such mental trembling leads to frustration and depression.

It is because of one or more of the above reasons that post-action mental trembling and mental torture occur which are the causes of anxiety and suffering. In order to avoid this torture, it is necessary :-

a. that we must know our ordained duties and should be ever prepared to fulfil them.

b. that we should develop all our potentialities to the optimum and prepare ourselves adequately to perform own duties efficiently.

c. that we should have a realistic and pragmatic view of the situation and keep our expectations and aspirations at a reasonable level so that we succeed in our efforts.

d. that we should perform all our duties seriously and to the best of our capacity so that we have the satisfaction of having done our best.

e. that we should perform our duties as a sacred obligation

and not from an egoistic point of view or with a limited selfish motive.

f. that while performing our duty, we should observe the divine law and the socially imposed laws and thus adhere to our Dharma.

If we do that, we shall not have the hangover of the result of our actions. We shall not be tormented. We shall have no regret, no anxiety, no bondages, no suffering. We shall have the satisfaction of having done well and lived well. Thus our actions will be detached actions.

J. What to do and what not to do?

All human actions are undertaken to achieve one or more of the following aims :

a. Peace

b. Harmony

c. Happiness

d. Salvation

e. Health

f. Knowledge

g. Prosperity

h. Social jutice

i. Progress

Such actions deserve to be undertaken by man as they relate to the natural urges and social aspirations. However, there is a limit to all these aims. Upto a point, actions relating to them are useful and beneficial but beyond a limit they start producing negative results and become harmful. Too much of anything is bad. That limit is set by their adverse affect on one's life. This is particularly so with regard to the enjoyment of sensual pleasures which provide great satisfaction to man. Even taking of nutritious food beyond a point harms the body. Therefore, moderation has to be observed in all actions.

One important duty of man is to develop all his potentialities. All such actions which help to develop one's abilities and capacities should be undertaken. However, the moment such activities affect our development adversely, they should be stopped. Similarly all

other activities which adversely affect one's development should never be undertaken.

In any social situation, we must look to the welfare of others as well. If an activity of ours is likely to adversely affect the development of others, it should be reviewed for modification and better not be undertaken. All social laws, customs, traditions and even civil and criminal laws are based on this principle. Further, social ethics wants us to undertake such activities which may help the development of others. Even rules of discipline in an educational institution are based on the same principle.

There is another criteria to decide what to do and what not to do. Every action is prompted by some intention. If the actions are based on meritorious and good intentions towards others, they should be undertaken. Lord Buddha calls such intentions as moral roots of the mind or Kusal Chetsika. On the other hand if the action is based on de-meritorious and evil intentions towards others, it should not be undertaken. Lord Buddha calls such intentions as immoral roots of the mind or Akusal Chetsika. He has listed all such intentions and explained them in detail.

Summary

The whole message of the Gita revolves around the ways and means of controlling the mind and not allow it to generate immoral intentions. Acquisition of true knowledge, practice of yoga, performance of yajna and surrender to God are some of the ways which lead to control of mind and lead man on the moral path. The Gita lays emphasis on following the moral path.

1. Activity or performance of action– physical or mental, is a natural urge. Normally man remains busy in one activity or the other.

2. Some actions are performed for one's own benefit. They are useful and must be performed. They are a part of duty towards one's ownself. There are many other actions which are a part of duty towards other members of the society. They are called ordained obligations and they must also be performed.

3. But all our actions have to the Niskham Karma or detached actions. Such actions are characterised by the following features:

a. Performed as a part of ordained obligation.
b. Performed seriously to the best of one's capacity.
c. Every sub-action of the action is also performed with full attention and concentration.
d. There is no pre-meditated self interest in the performance of the actions.
e. It is not undertaken with an egoistic attitude.

4. Only such actions save a person from suffering and subsequent mental torture.

Questions

1. How can you make your actions detached actions? State three such steps.
2. What are the consequences of our actions if they are not detached actions?
3. Make a list of your ten most important ordained obligations at this stage of life.
4. Award makes out of 100 to your performance of ordained obligations in life awarding marks out of 10 to each obligation.
5. State some ordained duties which you find difficult to fulfil.

II. Faith

A. Introduction

A child instinctively obeys his parents and teachers. Normally, he does not question them. Perhaps because he feels that they know better and also because he is almost dependent on them. But this mental disposition of accepting things without perception or reason, is among the adults also. We have often heard, "As you sow, so shall you reap." We instantly believe in this statement. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." We readily believe in this statement and pray. This mental disposition which prompts us to believe in a person or God without any supporting evidence or argumentation is called Faith.

B. Meaning of faith

Faith means trust or confidence. It is believing in a statement without insisting on any evidence or proof. Faith can be reposed in an idea, statement or a person-real or imaginary. Most men have faith in God. Many people repose their faith in their friends, parents, teachers, a holy man or gods. The basis of faith is confidence in the superiority and honesty of the person in whom we repose our faith. All persons have this mental disposition of reposing their faith in some one or the other. It is so natural and also universal. All religions are accepted on the basis of faith. All relationships depend on faith.

It is the superior status and authority of the other person which inspires faith in us towards him. It is our perception of superiority of the other person, over-confidence in him regarding his honesty, competence and sincerity towards us which strengthens our faith in him. It is also our past experience which cements our faith further. Every affirmation and confirmation of our belief in him further strengthens our faith and every disillusionment is likely to shaken or weaken our faith in him.

C. In whom should we repose our faith?

We should have faith in the following :-

a. **Faith in God,** His attributes, His law of Retributive Justice, and His laws of universal dynamics. A look at the chapter on God would convince us that this universe operates on the basis of His laws which are eternal, universal and infallible. We have no option but to have faith in them. They form the foundation of life in this world.

But understand clearly what is meant by having faith in God and what are its implications. Faith in God implies the following :-

i. We should remember God and worship Him in the manner stated in chapter on God.

ii. We should know and comply with the commandments of God.

iii. We should continuously make sincere efforts to imbibe in ourselves more and more of His three attributes– Bliss, Wisdom and Love. If we repose such faith in God, God will surely love us and bless us.

A good example of Faith in God is represented in the poem "Abou Ben Adhem" which reads as under :

Abou Ben Adhem

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase),
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold;
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold.

And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou" – The Vision raised its head.
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."

"And is mine one?" said Abou, "Nay, not so,"
Replied the Angle. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said, "I pray thee then.
Write me as one that loves his fellow men."
And Angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Leigh Hunt.

It may also be remembered that faith in God is not the same thing as faith in some institutional religion or in some religious scripture or some religious person. It is a direct relationship between man and his God without the intervention of any institution, scripture or individual.

b. Faith in yourself, your potentialities, your volition and your will-power. You are the master of your life and you have to live your life on your own. You will be able to do so only when you have confidence in yourself, your capacities, abilities and you

develop them suitably to face all situations in life. It is possible only when you have faith in yourself. That will strengthen your will-power, provide stability to your life and inspire you towards higher and higher goals. In the absence of such faith in yourself, your life is sure to be doomed. Faith in God and in yourself has to be implicit and total.

c. **Faith in culture** of the social group to which you belong. Man is a social being. His social unconscious is formed in early childhood in the company of his parents and other members of his cultural group. This gets ingrained in his psyche and he cannot free himself easily from its grip. So broadly speaking, man should have faith in the main traditions, customs, beliefs and rituals of his culture. But your faith in your culture need not be total. If the prescriptions and prohibitions of your culture run counter to the commandments of God, your developmental process, your performance of ordained duties or your inner voice, you need not be a slave to your culture. With the passage of time, some prescriptions and prohibitions become obsolete, irrelevant and even harmful. So an individual has to repose limited and conditional faith in his culture.

d. **Faith in the assertions of well established and widely accepted academic, constitutional and other authorities in their respective field.** The social heritage of common knowledge can be relied upon with confidence. No man can be perfect and master in all aspects of life and areas of knowledge. So, it is prudent to have faith in the cumulative wisdom of established authorities.

e. **Faith in your near and dear on the basis of your experience with them.** But such faith has to be limited and only in such respects where you have a positive and favourable experience with them. Also such faith is subject to constant review and adjustment.

Faith has to be reposed with discrimination and needs constant review particularly in the case of culture, other authorities and near and dear ones. Otherwise, it may take the form of blind faith or superstitions and lead to harmful effects.

D. Is reposing of faith useful?

Buddha considered faith as a meritorious and useful mental disposition. The Gita also states that on account of his faith, a person

acquires true knowledge (IV.39). It is further stated that having faith is natural for man. Whatever is the character and temperament of a person, his faith shall also assume the same form (XVII.2). A virtuous person shall have faith in God, in himself, in his culture and in saintly persons while a vicious person shall have faith in persons of his own inclinations. Therefore, the Gita warns that one should have faith in virtue, goodness, God, in his own divine nature, in his culture and in other persons of divine nature. Whenever a person reposes his faith in something, he gradually acquires the traits and attributes of the same.

If a person has faith in God, he will gradually acquire His attributes of bliss, wisdom and love in greater and greater measure. If a person has faith in himself, he will develop his potentialities, fulfil his ordained obligations, develop his self-confidence and lead a disciplined and regulated life. If a person has faith in his cultural traditions, he will have harmonious relationship with people around him and will be able to achieve his worldly aspirations. If he reposes his faith in well established and accepted authorities in their respective fields, he will acquire true knowledge and benefit from the same. If he reposes his faith in virtuous and saintly persons, and keeps their company, he will himself follow the virtuous path and lead a happy and contented life.

Buddha says, "Faith clears the mind of a person. A clear mind is a calm and stable mind – a mind at peace with himself and at peace with others." Faith strengthens our self-confidence, removes mental trembling, lurking doubts and ideological vacillations. It brings stability in life and prompts man towards higher and higher aspirations. Faith transforms a person in its own mould, faith helps to reach out to the higher goals which always inspire us towards a better life. So have faith in God, in yourself, in your cultural heritage, in well established authorities and in saintly persons.

Summary

1. One should have implicit and complete faith in God and in himself.

2. One may repose his faith in other persons depending upon their :–

a. Goodness and greatness

b. Usefulness.

c. Their superiority and sincerity towards you.

However, such faith is subject to periodical review.

3. One may have faith in an ideology, ideal or institution depending on their identity and compatibility with you. But, this also should be subject to periodical review keeping in view their relevance and usefulness.

Questions

1. Who is your soul-mate? State the reason for your implicit faith in him.

2. What do you see in a person before you repose your faith in him? State any three points.

3. Why should we review our faith in persons and ideologies from time to time?

4. How can you enhance your self-confidence?

5. Should we repose our faith in God? Give reason for your reply.

6. Recall the names of one or two teachers of yours for whom you still have great regard. State the reason for your respect for them.

III. Yoga

A. Introduction

Perhaps the most profound discovery in human history has been the "discovery that the breath is the link between the gross body and the subtle body and that through the regulation and control of the breath, both the gross body and the subtle body can be regulated and controlled." The credit of making this wonderful discovery goes to the ancient Rishis of India. The science and art of regulating and controlling the body, mind, intellect, ego and the unconscious through the control of breathing and other exercises is today known as Yoga.

The word "yoga" is mentioned in the Vedas but there are no clear hints to its technique and practice. However, there are clear

statements in the Upanishads about yoga. The age of early Upanishads is placed around 600 B.C. In Kath Upanishad, Yama clearly tells Nachiketa, "The wise call that stage as Yoga when all the senses are concentrated on one point and man becomes quite vigilant and active." (Kath. 3.10)[1]

So the tradition of Yoga in Vedic thought system is quite old. However, it was around 2nd century B.C. that Rishi Patanjali consolidated all relevant information about Yoga and presented a systematic and authentic treatise on Yoga called Yoga Sutra. Later, the Yoga came to be accepted as one of the six philosophical systems of ancient India.

B. Raja Yoga of Patanjali

The treatise on Yoga mentions the famous eight steps of Yoga which are as under :[2]

a. **Yama.** It means rules of good conduct comprising of :

i. Ahimsa or Non-violence
ii. Satya or truthfulness.
iii. Asteya or honesty
iv. Brahmacharya or celibacy.
v. Aprigraha or non-craving.

b. **Niyama.** It means the practice of positive mental attitudes comprising of :

i. Shaucha or cleanliness
ii. Santosh or contentment
iii. Tapa or hard persistent effort to attain success.
iv. Swadhyaya or study of scriptures to acquire an insight into the true nature of things.
v. Ishwar Pranidhan or devotion and surrender to God.

c. **Asan** or physical postures in which one can stay still with ease and comfort for a pretty long time.

d. **Pranayama** or regulation and control of breath.

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1. यदा पंचाव तिष्ठन्ते ज्ञानानि मनसा सह।
बुद्धिश्च न विचेष्ठति तामाहुः परमां गतिम्।।१०।। II-3.10, Kath. Up.
2. यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयोऽष्टावंगानि।। II.29, Yogasutra.

e. **Pratyahara** or refusal to attend to mental promptings originating from outside or inside the body.

f. **Dharna** or focusing of mind on any one object or thought.

g. **Dhyan** or meditation.

h. **Samadhi** or identification of the Self with an object or thought and having a clear vision of its ultimate essence.

Patanjali gave only a sketchy enumeration of these eight steps. He did not elaborate these points to explain the related practices and their implications. His treatise was meant for advanced yogis. His aim was spiritual emancipation and freedom from the wheel of transmigration of the devotees.

C. Other systems of Yoga

The tradition of meditation is not peculiar to Vedic thought system alone. In India, the Buddhist system of Vipassana and the Jaina system of Preksha Dhyan also developed almost side by side. These systems are distinct in name but they have much in common. "It is equally interesting to take note of the similarity of the main features of these three traditions of Yoga. The similarity of concepts is due to their similarity of development in the same cultural background and also due to the common origin in the very ancient times of India."

"Similar traditions of meditation were prevalent in China under the names of Tai-Chi-Chi-King, Jai-Ch Rules and Red-Oragon-Chi-King. In Islamic tradition, there is Sufi Earth-Dancing, Veil-Dancing and Whirling." Bible also clearly mentions, "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night." "My mouth shall speak wisdom and the meditation of my heart shall bring understanding."[1]

Patanjali had presented these sublime ideas more than 2000 years ago. Since then, there have been many more developments in the Indian tradition of Yoga. But the basic frame of eight steps of Patanjali has remained in tact. More and more details about varieties of Asans and Pranayama have been added from time to time by

1. S.N. Sharma, Indian Concept of Man and his Development. Parimal Publications 2004 Pages 157-158)

expert yogis. Different practising yogis have suggested various techniques of meditation. Other practices of Kriya, Mudra, Bandha etc. have also been added.

A great contribution has been made by the Tantra system and the Hath Yoga. These systems are an extension of Patanjali's Raja Yoga. Tantra does not believe in suppression of desires or denial of pleasures. Desires are considered as normal natural urges of the human mind and so they cannot be denied, ignored or wished away. There is a tradition of Tantra system even in Buddhism. These traditions are believed to have developed around the period of King Harsh Vardhan and they became quite popular after the 8th century. Unfortunately there is no single comprehensive and authoritative treatise on the philosophy and practices of Tantra.

The tradition of Hath Yoga lays emphasis on torture of the body and Chakra Sadhna in order to obtain miraculous powers. But these two systems lost their shine and became unpopular because of some inhuman and sensuous practices. However, all these traditions of yoga have merged together and some practices of Yoga from different traditions have become more popular.

During the 20th century, some saints have taken the message of yoga to the western countries and popularised the Yoga in different countries of the world. Recently, there has been an upsurge in favour of Yoga. Yoga has now come to mean the science and art of living in harmony with the fundamental laws of existence. Since yoga practices have become so popular and pervasive, it may be useful to go a bit deep into the basic ideas of the Yoga tradition.

D. Physiological basis of Yoga

The most important aim of Yoga is to get rid of suffering. The first and the most painful of suffering is the suffering of the body or any of its parts. Freedom from suffering depends upon :

a. proper growth and development of the body organs.
b. efficient operation of the physiological systems.
c. freedom from any ailment or physical pain.
d. high level of energy and its adequate and constant replenishment through balanced and nutritious diet.
e. healthy living habits.

Only then the body will be healthy and operationally fit. Most of all, it requires relaxation and exercises of the muscles and organs at the joints. Surprisingly, breathing, eating, drinking, physical activity and repose are natural urges and every person normally gets engaged in them. But exercising the muscles and organs is not natural for man. For this, one has to resort to volitional effort. Yoga just does that through its third constituent namely Asans. Asans involve relaxation and energizing exercises, suitable bodily postures and movement of organs at the joints like ankles, knees, shoulders, hips, trunk, elbows and hands.

Protoplasm in the DNA is the source of life. It is constituted of 23 different elements. Some of these are obtained from food while others are extracted from the environment through breathing and respiration. Decidedly, Pranayama is the best form of respiration. Thus yoga helps to enrich protoplasm- the source of life.

In this way, development and functional efficiency of the body parts are accordingly ensured, fatigue is removed and the whole body is energised. Thus a person gets rid of chances of physical pain or physiological disorders.

E. Psychological basis of Yoga

Man has within himself a psychological apparatus which is supposed to consist of mind, intellect, ego, and the unconscious. He also has natural urges of egoism and an irresistible attraction towards the objects of the world. These two systems urge him to move out towards the worldly objects and through them to enjoy the pleasures of the senses. There is another natural tendency in him to demand and crave for more and more of that object which gives him enjoyment. This unlimited craving for more and more enjoyment of the senses is the cause of his ruin. That is why Lord Krishna tells Arjun that Kaam or desire seated in the mind of man is his real enemy. Control on mind is therefore, necessary to save oneself from mental suffering. He also tells Arjun that a controlled mind is the best friend of man and an uncontrolled mind is the worst enemy of man. This is the psychological dilemma of man and the cause of his mental suffering.

Yoga helps man to control his mind. Through regulation and control of breath during Pranayama man is able to calm down and

regulate his mind. This is possible because of the following reasons :-

a. During Pranayama, breathing is always through the nose which is healthier and the air inhaled is free of dust particles. Also the inhaled air gets warmed up while passing through the longer nasal path before reaching the lungs.

b. The quantity of air which the lungs inhale, hold or expel are as under :-

i. Normal volume of breath - 500ml in an adult person.

ii. Inspiratory reserve volume which can be inhaled with additional effort - 2500ml to 3000 ml.

iii. Expiratory reserve volume which can be exhaled with additional effort - 1000ml.

iv. Residual volume - 1000 ml.

v. Total lung capacity - 5000 ml to 6000ml.

During Pranayama, breath is forcibly inhaled and exhaled to its maximum. Therefore, in each breath there is an additional volume of 2500 to 3000ml of air. It provides five to six times more oxygen to the lungs. More of oxygen naturally means more of energy for the body.

c. During normal breathing, the lower parts of the lungs never get evacuated and the air in those parts just stagnates. It is during pranayama only that the lungs get fully cleared.

d. The normal duration of breath in an adult is of five seconds while during Pranayama, the duration of breath can be between 30 to 40 seconds. It obviously means more of oxygen for each breath.

There is a direct co-relation between number of breaths per minute and longevity of life. It will be evident from the following :-

Living being	No. of breaths per minute	Expectancy of life
1. Tortoise	5	150 years
2. Snake	8	120 years
3. Elephant	12	100 years.
4. Man	12	100 years.
5. Horse	18	50 years.
6. Hare	40	7 years.

Obviously, Pranayama increases the longevity of life.

e. Whenever Pranayama or Dhyan is performed, mind is directed to concentrate on the midpoint between the eye-brows. Almost all major parts of the nervous system and particularly the central nervous system lie within this region. The Thalamus, Hypothalamus, Pituitary and Pineal glands, the fourth ventricle and the Limbic system are located in this very region. With the concentration of mind at this point, vital energy from the body flows to this point. There is increased vibration in the region and the whole region gets strengthened. This calms down the mind, sharpens the intellect and subdues the emotions. Therefore, the mind comes under control and the agitating desires of the mind calm down.

f. Pranayama is not only an exercise in breathing, but also a technique to improve the respiration. Respiration is the process of oxidation of food to form carbon dioxide, water and energy. It is a biochemical process. It releases lot of energy. It occurs inside all the cells of the body more intensively during Pranayama.

g. The mind and the breath are the most intimate friends in the human body. Both can move inside as well as outside the body. Both are very strong and are the life- breath of conscious life. Both are synchronised so well that even the slightest agitation in the mind gets reflected in the state of breathing. The two seem to move together. So it is expected that regulation and control of breath through Pranayama will naturally lead to regulation and control of mind.

h. Pranayama does not only result in regulation and control of mind, but also of the entire psychological apparatus including the intellect, ego, and the unconscious. It is the whole nervous system which is affected by Pranayama.

Thus it is obvious that all psychological disorders get subsided through the practice of Yoga. Practical experience of most persons confirm this conclusion. Researches of Mahrishi Mahesh Yogi have adequately substantiated these assertions.

F. Sociological basis of Yoga

Man is said to be a social being. He is born and brought up in a society. He lives in a society. On the whole, he seems to enjoy his

social life. Let us have a look at the inner constituents of his social life which control his outward relationships.

a. Natural urges of man relating to social life are as under :

i. **Strong attraction towards worldly objects and beings.** Man considers the objects and beings of the world as real and of great interest to him. He considers his body, his belongings and his relationships as real. He is physically and emotionally greatly attached to the objects of the world.

ii. **Egoism.** He considers himself, his body, mind etc. as an entity distinct from others. He is independent and autonomous. He has selfish interest in the objects and beings of the world and in his relationship with them. He craves for them with such egoistic attitude.

iii. **Love and attachment.** He prefers some persons, some objects, some ideas, some places to others and is greatly attached to them. He craves for them and enjoys their nearness and possession. He has a positive attitude towards them.

iv. **Aversion and hate.** He has an aversion towards some other persons, some other objects, some other ideas, some other places and hates to be in company with them. He has a negative attitude towards them.

v. **Wish to live forever.** Man desires to live forever. The idea of death sends a shudder to his spine and he is prepared to do anything to prolong his life.

vi. **Enjoyment of pleasures of the senses.** Sense organs and motor organs of man move out into the world and grasp the objects which can provide him pleasure. His desire for such enjoyment is unlimited and he craves for more and more of such pleasure in all possible ways and unmindful of the consequences.

vii. **Assertion to have his way.** Whenever and wherever it is possible, man wants to assert himself and have his way. He submits to others only when he has no other option.

b. Apart from these natural urges, man nurtures certain social aspirations which are as under :–

i. To earn name and fame and to improve his social status.

ii. To prosper and acquire more and more wealth, property and resources of sense satisfaction.

iii. To have progeny and continue his lineage.

c. With these urges and aspirations man struggles in the world for happiness and progress. This is possible only when he has control on his mind. If he gains control on his mind, he will not run after pleasures of the senses blindly. He will develop harmonious relations with others and avoid aversion towards others. Similarly, he will keep egoistic tendencies within limits. He will not get attached to anything beyond a limit because he knows fully well that the worldly objects are soon going to be beyond his grip. All this is possible only when his mind is under his control. He will enjoy the pleasures of the senses in moderation. Beyond a point every additional dose of worldly objects is going to yield less and less satisfaction. Also, a point comes when it begins to produce negative results and harm the person. This curvi-linear nature of worldly objects must be realised. This is simply a practical application of the famous Law of Diminishing Utility Yoga helps us to realise this and to exercise control over mind through Pranayama exercises. A controlled mind serves as our best friend and saves us from avoidable suffering.

G. The path of Yoga

The path of yoga is the same as the path of self-improvement or the path of science and art of happy living. It consists of the following steps :–

1st Step – The Resolve

Make a determined resolve here and now that you will make your life sublime and not degrade yourself in any manner. This involves two sub steps:

a. To be vigilant about your thoughts, words and actions and not to hurt or deceive anybody. The five steps of yama namely non-violence, truth, honesty, celibacy and non- craving have been prescribed for the same.

b. The second sub-step is to take five positive steps of cleanliness, contentment, hard work, study of scriptures to acquire knowledge

and faith in God as prescribed under Niyam by Patanjali.

A resolve to follow the path of Yoga will surely prompt you to try your best. It is obvious that there is no perfection in observing these prescription. What is required is an honest effort to constantly move in these directions.

2nd step – Practical Exercises

The second step again involves two sub-steps :

a. Asan. They constitute a number of physical exercises. So much information is available on Asans. There are a number of relaxation and energization exercises. Select a few as suited to your situation and practise them regularly.

b. Pranayama. They are exercises in breathing, respiration and watchfulness. Select only a few and practise them regularly as described.

As a result of these two steps, body, sense and motor organs, intellect and ego will gradually come under your control and you will reach the stage of Pratyahar when you will naturally refuse to attend to temptations of the world if they are likely to be harmful to you.

3rd Step – Meditation

The third step of Yoga consists of three sub-steps :

a. Dharna. Dharna means identifying some suitable subject for meditation. Buddha has suggested a long list of such subjects from gross objects to subtle objects and even to conceptual ideas like compassion, faith etc. But it will be better to select some subject of your interest such as your great weakness, your strong quality, some day-to-day problem etc. Dharna means to identify some object or idea for meditation to the exclusion of all others.

b. Dhyan. Dhyan implies concentrating your mind on that selected single idea for a long time and analysing its various aspects for its deeper and deeper understanding and ultimately reaching its true essence.

c. Samadhi. There is no separate exercise for Samadhi. With prolonged Dhyan, the devotee gets detached from every other object or idea and gets to know everything about that one idea. At the end, the concept alone remains which represents the real essence of the object.

These three steps together are called Sanyam or self-control. As a matter of fact, these three steps lead to total control on body, mind, intellect, ego and even unconscious. Different yogis have mentioned different ways of meditation. However, the following steps are common to almost all systems of meditation practices. They can easily be adopted by a beginner with great advantage :-

i. Select a calm and quiet place with pleasing surroundings.
ii. Sit straight but with ease and comfort. The head and spinal cord should be well straightened.
iii. Keep the whole body still and stop all physical movements.
iv. Gradually relax all parts of the body - external as well as internal.
v. Concentrate on the stream of consciousness with complete awareness. Do not let the mind wander away. If it does, bring it back.
vi. Concentrate the mind on some point, object, idea, ideal preferably not connected with pleasures of the sense organs.
vii. If the mind strays away from that point, bring it back and again continue to concentrate on the mid-point between the eye-brows.
viii. Exhaust the conscious thoughts about the idea till the mind feels relaxed.
ix. Feel calmness and pleasant relief.

The process of such concentration and meditation remains the same, but as time passes, the ease and comfort increases and the intensity of effect also improves.

H. Benefits of practice of Yoga

a. Practice of Yama and Niyama i.e. Step I confers the following benefits :-

i. Relations with relatives and friends become more cordial and harmonious.
ii. You get willing co-operation from others.
iii. You get more affection and respect from others.

iv. Your will-power gets more and more strengthened.

v. You feel buoyancy in your day-to-day work.

vi. Negative thinking gives place to positive attitude.

b. Practice of Step II relating to Asan and Pranayama leads to the following advantages :-

i. Your physiological systems operate at a higher efficiency level.

ii. Your energy level improves which serves as a powerhouse for more work.

iii. The efficiency level of work gets upgraded.

iv. Mind becomes calm and well regulated.

v. Intellect becomes sharpened and the cognitive process improves.

vi. The subtle body organs i.e. mind, intellect, ego and the unconscious become strong and more effective.

vii. General health improves.

viii. There is great internal contentment and joy.

c. Practice of Step III confers the following benefits :-

i. There is greater control on sense organs and mind. Therefore, the craving for enjoyment of pleasure of the senses gets moderated. This moderation in seeking pleasure of the senses leads to reduction in suffering.

ii. Mind becomes calm and quiet. So worry, anxiety, mental trembling, imaginary fears etc. get reduced.

iii. The intellect becomes sharp. So intellection process becomes more effective and productive. Wisdom dawns and decisions become more correct and productive.

iv. Intuition which is the inner ability to directly arrive at the ultimate truth without the intervention of sensory perception or intellection gets strengthened.

v. The repressed desires, prejudices, negativity etc. get cleared. The unconscious becomes light and free from mental deformities. It leads to peace of mind and inner happiness.

vi. Life becomes stable, balanced and free of anxiety. It adds to the joy of living.

Thus the practice of Yoga is the greatest contribution of Vedic thought to the happiness of man.

Summary

1. Yoga is the art and science of health and happy living.
2. It implies
   a. Commitment and adherence to goodness.
   b. Regulated and disciplined life.
   c. Performing energizing physical exercises.
   d. Exercising control on sense organs and mind through Pranayama.
   e. Moderation in enjoyment of pleasures of the senses.
   f. Balance in the four aspects of life– physical, psychological, social and spiritual.
   g. Performance of one's ordained duties.
   h. Introspection and self-improvement.
   i. Frequent contact with Divine mind.
3. Practice of yoga leads to end of suffering and attainment of happiness in life.

Questions

1. State the ten prescriptions under Yama and Niyama. Award marks out of 10 depending upon the extent to which you are able to observe them.
2. Prepare a programme of about ten minutes duration of some physical exercises and practise them regularly for one month.
3. Select five exercises of Pranayama and practise them regularly for one week.
4. How can you approach and befriend your Divine Mind?
5. Whom would you like to be your Yoga Guru and why?
6. Purchase a good book on yoga and read it.

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IV. Yajna

A. Introduction

1. Yajna is the oldest Vedic ritual. It is mentioned in the Vedas in various contexts. The idea of Yajna originated from the natural phenomena of evaporation of water, formation of clouds in the sky and showering of rain on the earth resulting in the appearance of vegetable kingdom for the benefit of living beings on the earth. It was postulated that this yajna is being performed by the Sun-God. The Sun sucks water from the surface of the water bodies on the earth through its rays in the form of water vapours. These water vapours get accumulated in the upper regions of the sky. Here they get cooled. The wind scatters the clouds all over the sky. In the higher layers of the sky, these water vapours get cooled and drop on various parts of the earth in the form of rain. Timely and adequate rains irrigate the crops and nourish the vegetable kingdom. This gives us the cereals, fruits, vegetables, herbs, trees and all types of greenery. They serve as food for the human beings and animal kingdom. Thus a little sacrifice on the part of the sun-god results in lot of good for the world. '**Any act of small sacrifice on the part of an individual resulting in lot of good for the community came to be designated as a yajna.**' This yajna by the sun-god came to be known as the cosmic yajna. On the pattern of this cosmic yajna, the idea of yajna is social life originated.

B. Vedic ritual of Yajna-Havan

2. The importance of the cosmic yajna was so deeply ingrained in the minds of the Vedic Rishis that Sun-god became an object of worship. Even fire (Agni)- physical representative of Sun on the earth assumed great importance. The greatest number of hymns in the Rigveda are dedicated to fire. The first word of the first mantra of Rigveda begins with the word 'Agni'. The great purifying quality of Agni soon came to the notice of the Rishis. They thought of purification of the physical environment through the agency of Agni. Agni became the mouth of all gods. Offerings began to be made to various Vedic gods through the agency of Agni and thus the most important ritual of Vedic culture evolved around the concept of yajna. The following were the constituents of the ritual which later on came to be known as Havan :

a. Agni. Fire or Agni was considered as the best representative of all the Vedic gods to receive offerings in the form of oblations.

b. Havan Kund. A specially identified small piece of land earmarked for the location of Agni was called Havan Kund. Later on, various geometrical designs of Havan Kund were evolved to suit the special purpose of the yajna and for the god for whom the yajna was to be performed.

c. Havi. The material which was to be offered in the form of oblations. It was soon discovered that ghee, some cereals, herbs, wood of some trees etc. had great purifying effect when burnt in fire. So these things served as material for oblations in Havan.

d. Performer of Havan. The person who offered the oblations to the god through the fire-god. It could be the householder or some priest on his behalf. Any number of persons could join the performance of Havan. Normally, it was a social ritual on behalf of the community.

e. Recitation of Vedic Mantras. Recitation of Vedic mantras in itself was considered as a meritorious act. Recitation of relevant mantra concerned with that god at the time of offering oblations to that god became all the more important. The mantras could be recited by the person performing the yajna or by a priest specially proficient in the recitation of Mantras.

f. The Aim. The aim of performing the Havan could be :

i. purification of physical environment.

ii. seeking some public good for the benefit of society.

iii. seeking some personal favour from the god concerned.

iv. self purification through the chanting of Vedic mantras.

This whole process came to be known as Havan or Yajna.

Gradually, the entire process came to be refined more and more and the institution of havan or yajna became the most important Vedic ritual. It can safely be said that the entire Vedic thought revolves around two basic concepts - yajna and yoga. Yajna is the social version of Vedic religion and Yoga is its personalised version. Therefore, the importance of yajna in Vedic religion. This form of yajna came to be known as "Material yajna" because in this yajna

some material or Dravya was used as oblations. Therefore, this was called Dravya yajna.

C. Other forms of Yajna

a. **Manas Yajna.** From weaknesses in the mind, attention was drawn to wrong ideas, concepts, rules, laws, principles, customs, traditions, rituals etc. which defiled the intellect and resulted in wrong knowledge. It was considered necessary to burn out this wrong knowledge by offering this as oblation to the inner Self and thus purify the Self. This was known as Manas yajna. It also included reading of the true scriptures, keeping company of divine persons, meditation etc. It was from Manas yajna that the science and art of yoga was developed for the good of mankind.

b. **Gyan Yajna.** Later on, the scope of Manas yajna was further widened. Study of scriptures to gain true knowledge, visiting learned saints to acquire true knowledge and other efforts to gain knowledge and to get rid of ignorance were also included within the scope of Gyan yajna. There is a mention of several other types of yajnas in the Gita (IV.23-30). Swami Dayanand laid great emphasis on Gyan yajna and he included it in his ten bye-laws of Arya Samaj. The relevant bye law reads, "Every person should always be ready to accept truth and renounce untruth."

D. Meaning of Yajna

An analysis of the earlier Vedic practice of yajna reveals that the purpose of yajna was purification of physical environment through the offering of oblations of material objects to the fire-god. In the case of Manas yajna, the purpose was purification of mind through the practice of Rajayoga and to get rid of the mental defilements. The aim of Gyan yajna was to get rid of ignorance and the attainment of true knowledge. Thus important constituent elements in the ritual of yajna appeared to be the following :

a. Making some sacrifice by the individual or by the community.
b. Rendering some personal service to the individual or to the community.
c. Purification, self-improvement or development of the individual, community or environment.

d. Performance of a ritual to provide legitimacy and sanctity to the process through the services of priestly class of Brahmins.

e. Recitation of Vedic mantras during the process which explained the purpose of the whole exercise.

Thus, yajna denoted a sanctified social ritual which involved individual and community sacrifice and service for some individual or community welfare. Sacrifice and service for public good is the essence of Vedic yajna. Thus the concept of sacrifice and service for common good became desirable and necessary in Vedic thought. It is still relevant. **It is just another name for social service.**

E. The Panch Mahayajnas

In due course of time, the institution of yajna became inhuman. Animal sacrifice became a part of the oblations. Hundreds of animals were thus slaughtered in the name of yajna. Also, the system became very costly and elaborate.

It became difficult for the common man to perform yajna. The real purpose of yajna was relegated to the background. Therefore, many people criticized all these baneful practices and wanted to do away with all such rituals. Buddha and Mahavir were very unhappy with all such violence and economic waste. So, they laid great stress in their teachings on compassion and non-violence.

As a consequence of the bitter criticism by the Buddhist and Jain Saints of the aberrations which had crept into the institution of Vedic yajna as practised around the post-epic era that the Brahmin priests were forced to review the practice of yajna as prevalent at that time and bring about suitable changes in the whole process. After much consideration, the practice of yajna was however approved and in the Dharam Shastras, five types of yajnas were prescribed. The spirit of sacrifice and service and aims of purification, improvement, development and service were recognised as the crucial elements of yajna. The five Maha Yajnas as prescribed are as under :-

a. Brahma yajna. It involves study of Vedas and other scriptures to acquire true knowledge about God, His attributes, His laws as operative in the world and developing devotion towards Him.

b. Deva yajna. It comprises of the company of the learned saints

and cultivation of purity, truthfulness and other meritorious qualities. It also includes Havan in the morning and evening along with recitation of Vedic mantras and offering of material oblations to the fire-god. Learned saints are considered as Devas and rendering service to them was considered essential.

c. Pitri yajna. It implies sacrifice for and rendering personal service to the father, mother, teachers and other elder members in the family.

d. Atithi yajna. It means paying due respect to virtuous scholars who have taken to sanyas and are serving the society by preaching the message of the Vedas. This also included providing food and other facilities to begging students of the Gurukul of those days.

e. Vaisvadeva yajna. It comprised of offering small symbolic quantities of cooked food to the fire-god in the kitchen to ensure purification of physical environment in the house. This also included offering food to cows, dogs, birds, insects and other living beings as a recognition of their service to the society. Providing food and other facilities to the sick, destitute, and other needy persons was also considered necessary under Vaisvadeva yajna.

These five Mahayajnas have been prescribed in the code of Manu (IV.21)[1] and other Smrities. Broadly speaking, they were expected to be performed by all householders. To some extent, they are still performed by many in some form or the other.

F. Relevance of Yajna in modern times

The essence of yajna as prevalent during Vedic period and thereafter can be stated as under :–

a. Purification of physical environment and getting rid of all pollution.

b. Purification of self and development of meritorious qualities.

c. Acquisition of true knowledge and getting rid of ignorance and wrong knowledge.

d. Rendering personal service to parents and other old and needy persons of the family.

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1. ऋषि यज्ञं देवयज्ञं भूत यज्ञं च सर्वदा।
नृयज्ञं पितृ यज्ञं च यथाशक्ति न हापयेत्॥ IV.21. Manusmriti

e. Honouring saintly persons, social workers and other scholars engaged in the service of the society.

f. Serving the sick, the destitute, and other needy persons.

g. Looking after animals, birds and other living beings and to be merciful to them.

The importance of all the above is self-evident and they are all very much relevant in our life even today. It is for the individual himself to determine how he can be helpful in the above effort. Such effort may be called Yajna or given any other name.

Summary

1. Yajna implies such actions as :

a. which purify the external environment of air pollution

b. which purify the mind of vicious mental tendencies

c. which promote and support socially productive and beneficial activities

d. which appreciate and honour selfless service.

e. which help the needy, the sick, the weak and the oppressed.

2. One should perform and support such actions to the extent possible.

Questions

1. Why Yajna is considered of the same nature as social service?

2. Recall a few instances of selfless social service rendered by you during the current year.

3. On the first day of every month, recall the names of those persons who have been of some help to you. Feel grateful to them for their timely help. Make such a list for the last month

4. What is meant by social service?

5. How do you make sure that someone really deserves your help?

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V. Dharma

A. Introduction

Gita tells us, "Whenever there is a decline of Dharma and predominance of Adharma in this world, I incarnate Myself from time to time to save the virtuous from oppression, punish the vicious and re-establish the order of Dharma." It implies that there is an order in this world established by God which is characterised by Dharma. What is that Order? The Lord says that the divine order is such that the virtuous persons are at peace and happy and the vicious persons are kept under proper discipline and not allowed to oppress the virtuous. Now who is a virtuous person? This has been well explained in the Gita in Chapter XVI.1-3 Among other qualities, a virtuous person is one who is :–

a. Pure in his mind and intellect.

b. His senses and mind are under his control.

c. Duty-conscious and sincere in fulfilment of his duties.

d. Well conversant with the scriptures.

e. Truthful.

f. Free from anger, greed, jealousy and hatred.

g. Compassionate and altruistic.

It seems to imply that the above attributes constitute Dharma. If it is so, then only a few follow the path of Dharma.

B. Meaning of Dharma

Unfortunately, there is no English equivalent word for Dharma. The dictionary defines Dharma as "Righteousness that underlies the law." But then what is righteousness? It is not clear. The following words are often interchangeably used for Dharma and Adharma :

Dharma	Adharma
Correct	Incorrect
Appropriate	Inappropriate
Right	Wrong
Good	Bad
Desirable	Undesirable
Ethical	Unethical

Moral	Immoral
Virtuous	Vicious
Righteousness	Unrighteousness

The list can go on. All these words are indicative of Dharma but they are not equivalent to Dharma. Dharma is something all these put together and still something more.

Dharma is a social concept and refers to a mode of behaviour. A mode of behaviour comes under the category of Dharma or Adharma when there are two or more persons involved in a situation. A mode of behaviour which respects the Divine law and the divine rights of the other person (s) is Dharma and a mode of behaviour which violates the divine law and or the divine rights of the other persons (s) Adharma. Divine law refers to the absolute and relative laws of nature. Their violation harms the individual himself. Divine right of an individual are as under :–

a. Creativity or development of one's potentialities and their manifestations.

b. Free-will about the method of development and the manifestation of developed faculties in the fulfilment of one's ordained duties.

Therefore, all those intentions and actions which help the above two processes of self and others can be stated as Dharma and all those intentions and actions which hinder the above two processes of Self and others can be stated as Adharma.

The Sanskrit word "Dharma" involves inalienable quality of an entity without which it will not be called that entity. Sweetness is the inalienable quality of sugar. So, sweetness is called the Dharma of sugar. Without sweetness, there can be no sugar. What is that without which a man will not be called a man? Sometimes, the word 'animal' is used as opposite of man. An animal is stated to be brutish, sensual, driven by instinct, selfish, devoid of intellect etc. So, one who has these characteristics cannot be called a man. So, opposite to these may be the traits of man:

a. Whose senses are under his control.

b. Who is not driven by sensory pleasures alone.

c. Who is kind and considerate.

d. Who takes into consideration the view point of others as well.

e. Who uses reason while taking decisions.

These qualities surely constitute Dharma of man.

Sometimes, it is said that God created man in his own image. So man should have the same attributes as God. Bliss, Wisdom and Love are the attributes of God. So a person who has these three attributes of happiness, wisdom and love should be called a man. So a person whose words, actions and feelings generate happiness, exhibit wisdom and promote love is man. If this is so, then Dharma would mean "Mode of behaviour which promotes happiness, loving and harmonious relationships with himself and among others constitute Dharma." The State, Society and Man himself set for themselves a set of laws, a code of conduct and a pattern of behaviour which lead to happiness and harmony. These laws, codes and behaviour patterns are called Dharma.

Shri Ram Acharya has outlined the following three steps for observing one's Dharma :

a. *Upasana* or worship of God by :

i. remembering Him, His attributes and His commandments.

ii. seeking blessings for the following two steps

b. *Sadhana* or self-improvement by:

i. development of one's potential capacities to the optimum.

ii. observing a restrained and regulated life-style through a judicious use of one's :

- Wealth and other resources.
- Sense organs and mind.
- Thoughts, feelings and sensations.
- Time.

c. *Aaradhana* or service of mankind by :

i. performance of one's ordained duties to the best of one's capacity.

ii. performing selfless social service with detachment.

There are so many other propositions suggested by saints.

C. Levels of Dharma

Dharma or laws have several levels. Broadly speaking, Dharma has three levels :-

a. God prescribed Dharma or Divine Laws.

b. Man prescribed Dharma or Human Laws.

c. Individual defined Dharma or Personal laws.

a. Divine Law. Divine law or God prescribed Dharma is eternal, universal and infallible. Such laws have been discovered by man and presented for the benefit of the society. They help in the sustenance of the universe and often lead to bliss, wisdom and love. These laws can be divided into two categories :-

i. **Absolute Divine Laws.** Those divine laws which relate to the eternal entities- God and His attributes. They are eternal, absolute, infallible and without any qualifying clause. They also relate to the eternal existence of ultimate entities like matter-stuff, mind-stuff, and energy. They have mostly been discovered by saints. Laws relating to the movement of planets are absolute. That is why we can predict eclipses.

ii. **Relative Divine laws.** These laws are relative and are valid with reference to certain dimensions like, time, space, quality, capacity, and other attributes. These laws are governed by the Theory of Relativity as stated by Einstein. These laws have been discovered by scientists. They are subject to change with a change in the related dimensions. They relate to the phenomenal world and its nature. Laws relating to weather are relative. The phrase, "Alter thing being equal" is added to such laws.

b. Human laws. Human laws are those laws which have been prescribed by the society with reference to its unique circumstances. These laws relate to the mutual relationship of individuals and groups of individuals and physical circumstances. They can also be divided into two categories :-

i. **State Laws.** Such laws have been passed by constitutional authorities of the State for the welfare of its citizens.

ii. **Social Codes.** Customary and traditional practices prescribed by non-constitutional authorities for the welfare of its members.

c. Personal Laws. It is in the light of these laws that the Dharma of an individual or Dharma of a group of individuals is prescribed. Personal Dharma of an individual is determined in the light of the above Divine and Human laws with reference to the special circumstance of that individual. These special circumstances are constituted by his age, physical status, social circumstances and the then existing situation. No generalisations can be made and no one else can prescribe for an individual what his Dharma is in a particular situation. It is for him and him alone to decide subject to the provisions of the Divine laws and the State laws. Whether you should help somebody or not can be decided only by you and by none else.

D. Religions as the source of Dharma

In all ancient societies, religion served as the source of Dharma. Almost all religions had been organised to establish the kingdom of God on earth or to have a "Paradise on Earth". But ironically, they became the greatest cause of discord, conflict, violence and even wars. All attempts for reconciliation of different religions by well intentioned persons like Nanak, Kabir, and in recent times by Gandhi failed because almost all religions except the Vedic religion if it can be called a religion had been based on the revelations, sayings, teachings and preachings of a prophet or a saint who had been born in a country, in a society and in a culture. His preachings include man's relation to God, to universe, to society and to man himself. So, all religions are to some extent culture specific. Since cultures differ widely in their finer details, so reconciliation of religions is not possible. Religion may serve as a source of Dharma for that particular cultural group only but not for humanity as a whole.

Manu had prescribed the following ten components of Dharma. (Manusmriti VI.92.)[1]

1. Firmness of mind.
2. Spirit of forgiveness.
3. Devotion to virtue.
4. Acquisition through honest means.

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1. धृति क्षमा दमोऽस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रिय निग्रहः।
धीं विद्या सत्यमक्रोधो दशकं धर्म लक्षणम्।। VI. 92. Manusmriti

5. Inner purity.
6. Control on senses.
7. Development of intellect.
8. Acquisition of true knowledge.
9. Truthfulness.
10. Freedom from anger.

E. Philosophies and ideologies as the source of Dharma

Western philosophers prefer to use the word "value" in place of Dharma. They are afraid of using the word "Education of Dharma" or "Education of Religion". They use the word "Value-Education". But its implication seems to be "Morality for the Citizens." Various philosophers have stated their views regarding "values" as under :–

a. **Plato.** Reason is a blessing of God to man. Whatever appeals to reason is good, moral and valuable. Whatever does not appeal to reason is immoral and bad.
b. **Herbert Spencer.** Whatever provides pleasure is good and whatever causes pain is bad.
c. **Leslie Stephen.** Whatever promotes health, equilibrium and efficiency is good and moral and whatever adversely affects health, equilibrium and efficiency is bad and immoral.
d. **Henry Sidgwick.** Whatever promotes excellence is moral and whatever adversely affects excellence is immoral.
e. **Bradley.** The greater the social good, greater the morality involved.

All these concepts of morality are subjective and vague and ultimately shift the responsibility to decide what is moral and good either on the individual or on the State.

But all these concepts of Dharma point in the right direction however vague may be the hint. It may be argued that God is another name for the good. Godliness is surely of the nature of Goodness. Bliss, wisdom and love – all the three are good. To decide what is goodness, one need not go anywhere. There is God or goodness sitting right inside every man in the form of Divine Mind. (Gita X.20) (Gita XIII.17).

Before you utter a sentence, entertain a feeling or get into an act,

ask this Divine Mind whether it is 'good'. The Divine Mind will promptly whisper the right answer in your astral ears. It is another thing that we never converse with this Divine Mind and do not heed its sane advice. But it is always with us. It is always for us. It is our best friend, best philosopher and best guide. As a matter of fact, it is the Dharma incarnate seated inside all of us. It is so near us. But we opt to move far away from it. It is not difficult to know what is Dharma even in the most difficult circumstances. It is another matter that we may not have the courage and conviction to follow the path of Dharma.

This unawareness of presence of God or Divine Mind within us and to consider the human mind as the final arbiter of truth and dharma is Avidya or ignorance which is the cause of all our suffering. Human mind if not properly trained and under control is the greatest enemy of man (Gita. VI.6) which leads him astray from the path of Dharma and is the cause of all his sufferings. To realise the presence of Divine Mind within us and to lead one's life in accordance with the dictates of this Divine Mind is Vidya or wisdom. This is Self-Realisation and even God-Realisation. One who is conscious of this fact never deviates from the path of Dharma. He is always with God and God is always with him. Scriptures remind us time and again about the two friendly birds sitting on the same body tree (Rig.I.164.20) (Svetashvatar Up. IV.6) (Atharva IX.14.20). How easy and convenient it is to know and decide what is Dharma!

F. Need for articulation of Dharma

Society is also a divine organisation and exists from the very beginning. God has issued certain commandments to man to be observed. These commandments had to be issued because Man is born with certain mental tendencies some of which are virtuous while others are vicious. If a person inculcates vicious mental tendencies and somehow acquires worldly power, status, wealth and other resources, he can conveniently ignore those commandments of God and make the life of other persons miserable. So, some control has to be exercised on those members of the society who do not comply with the commandments of God and who are in the grip of vicious mental tendencies. Therefore, society has been entrusted with the following responsibilities :–

a. Facilitate interaction among the members of the society by maintaining law and order and peace in the society.
b. Articulate rights and duties of individuals and groups of individuals during their relationship so that the relationship remains harmonious and productive. (legislative functions)
c. Adjudicate between individual and individuals, individuals and groups and groups and groups in case of any dispute. (Judicial functions)
d. Ensure that members of the society lead a happy and harmonious life while gainfully engaged in their day-to-day worldly life. (Executive functions)

In order to spell out the Dharma for the members of the society, the scriptures have laid down prescriptions and have stated who should be entrusted with the above responsibilities.

So far as the legislative functions of laying down the tenets of Dharma are concerned, it is ordained that a person having the following qualities should be entrusted with legislative functions or articulation of Dharma (Gita XVIII-42)–

a. Who has full control over his senses and mind.
b. Who is pure in thought, feelings and emotions.
c. Who is free from greed, anger, pride, jealousy, hatred etc.
d. Who is upright and compassionate.
e. Who is well versed in scriptures.
f. Who is austere, serene and simple.

As against this, see the qualifications prescribed for a legislator in India :

a. A citizen of India.
b. His age is 25 years or more.
c. Does not hold office of profit in Central or State Government.
d. Has not been declared insane by a court and is not insane.
e. Has not been convicted for any offence for more than two year and had been released at least five years back.
f. Had not been dismissed from Government service on charge of dishonesty or treason during the last five years.

These conditions are necessary to make an individual eligible for any post– even for the post of a class IV servant. However, they are utterly inadequate for the responsibilities of a legislator who has to decide what is good for the nation. The qualifications for eligibility to any post should be commensurate with the nature of responsibilities– physical health, social skills, leadership qualities, moral strength, technical knowledge, practical experience etc.

It can easily be imagined what kind of legislators will constitute the Parliament or State Assemblies with such eligibility conditions. More surprising is the casual attitude of voters who send such persons to legislatures. How can Dharma be established in our country under such conditions?

The position is not better even in the case of judicial and executive functions.

Another important point about Dharma is the intention behind the actions. Not only that the action should be virtuous, but it should be rooted in equally good intentions. In the absence of good intentions, action will only be as how off and not genuine action. That will not be observance of Dharma.

G. What is Dharma?

1. All such ideas, feelings and actions which promote the **Divine Law** consisting of :

    a. Bliss and happiness.

    b. Wisdom and welfare.

    c. Love and harmony.

2. All such ideas, feelings and actions which promote the following socially approved aims :

    a. Health

    b. Happiness

    c. Harmony

    d. Peace

    e. Prosperity

    f. Progress

3. All such ideas, feelings and actions which promote the

following elements in various aspects of the life of man :

a. Physical Aspect.

i. Health of the body.

ii. Operational efficiency of the physiological systems.

iii. Level of energy.

b. Psychological Aspect.

i. Control on mind in seeking pleasures of the senses.

ii. Expansion from egoistic tendency to inclusive welfare.

iii. Freedom from suffering, anxiety, worry.

c. Social Aspect

i. Harmonious relationships.

ii. Reasonable success in attaining social aspirations of wealth, name, fame, progeny

d. Spiritual Aspect.

i. Peace of mind.

ii. Faith in God.

iii. Welfare of fellow-men.

H. Conclusion

It seems that every person has to decide on his own what his Dharma is. No one else can decide on my behalf, "What is my Dharma." Inspite of all the wisdom and ingenuity of Lord Krishna, Arjun remained unconvinced. Ultimately, Lord Krishna had to tell Arjun : "Do what you feel." (Gita XVIII.63). His second advice was "Leave everything to Me. Have full faith in Me. I shall free you from all suffering." (Gita XVIII.66). The best course open to man is to be always in touch with his Divine Mind, seek guidance from it and act accordingly.

Summary

1. Every one has to define and articulate his Dharma himself. Others can help but not decide what is one's Dharma.

2. Dharma implies those thoughts, ideas, emotions, feelings and actions which :-

a. help you to develop your potential abilities.

b. allow you to express and satisfy your natural urges upto a moderate level.

c. help you to attain your worldly social aspirations upto a reasonable extent.

d. help you to perform your ordained duties.

e. help you to get rid of your suffering.

3. Your divine mind is your best friend to guide you about your dharma. Whenever in doubt consult your divine mind for guidance.

Questions

1. What is your Dharma as a student? State any five such elements.

2. How do you decide what is your Dharma in a particular situation?

3. Why Arjun could not decide about his Dharma?

4. Why are you not able to stick to your Dharma inspite of knowing fully well what is your dharma in a particular situation.

5. Whom do you consult to decide about your Dharma in any situation?

6. What book, if any do you consult to know your Dharma?

* * *

VI. Religion

A. Meaning

At birth, an infant has no religion, no culture. He is just a human being. Later, he gets an identity, a nationality, a religion, a caste, a culture, etc. All these are given to him by his parents and they are accepted by the society without demanding any other evidence. Later, the individual also accepts his status as such. Religion is also one of them. The infant absorbs religion from his parents and other members of the family in several instalments as under :

a. **Identity.** The parents give him a name of their own religion. So also other symbols and signs. His dress, etc. are also as per their

religious tradition. Such that, from these features, his religion can be easily identified.

b. **Rituals.** As the infant grows, another layer of religion is added to him. He is made to participate in religious rituals, customs and traditions like worship, salutations, fasting, pilgrimage, charity, etc. These rituals become a part of his life. Also, he follows customs and traditions of his religion.

c. **Morality.** Later, he interacts with other members of his society and enters into relationship with them. He is expected to know his duties towards them and fulfil those duties as prescriptions and prohibitions of his religion. Thus, he adopts a code of conduct of his religion.

d. **Knowledge.** As he advances in age, he reads the scriptures and gathers his knowledge about God, universe, world, man, society, etc. and comes to relate this knowledge to his morality and rituals. This strengthens his faith in his institutional religion. He also attends functions organised by his religious organisations and thus becomes a fulfledged member of his religious fraternity.

These four layers of religion complete the external garb of his religion. This indoctrinates the individual in a way of life called culture. Most of the persons are satisfied with this stage of their religion and lead their day-to-day life according to the cultural tenets of their religion. However, the essence of religion lies beyond this ritual form of religion.

e. **Spirituality.** 'Spiritual' means "highly refinement in thoughts and feelings". Spirituality means "practical step for moving towards refinement of thoughts and feelings and moulding one's day-to-day life in accordance with the moral principles of his religion." Every religion prescribes certain practices which if undertaken in the right spirit lead to purification of mind and intellect, strengthening of virtuous tendencies and natural inclination towards goodness, duty performance, courteous behaviour and welfare of all. Entering into the spirit of the religion and actually leading a religious life is spiritualisation. As a matter of fact, this is the gateway to real religion.

f. **Enlightenment.** As he grows older, he seeks justification for his religious beliefs, code of conduct, customs, traditions and rituals.

He studies the scriptures of his religion, reads his cultural history and further consolidates and strengthens his faith in his religion. But this does not happen with all or automatically. Only some seek such justification while vast majority lead their religious life based on the first four layers. Those who seek justification and take their religion seriously, make effort to enrich their religious life further. They like to know about other religions, their customs, traditions, codes of conduct, beliefs and borrow from them whatever they find useful and compatible to their own situation. They come to understand what they believe and what they practise. They also know why do they do so. They appreciate the beliefs and practices of other religions but prefer to stick to their own with such adjustment as may be necessary because of their special circumstances.

g. **Altruism.** Out of the enlightened ones, some see through different religions and find a basic unity in the apparent diversity. They consider the humanity as one brotherhood under the fatherhood of one God or under the patronage of one universal law. They pray for the welfare of all and seek the good of all. They even have glimpses of one universal religion for the entire humanity.

h. **Universality.** The last layer of religion is the concept of one universe with welfare of all that exists including all living beings, inanimate objects and the entire existence.

Religion means all the above eight components. Normally, institutional religion lays emphasis on the first four components namely identity, rituals, morality and knowledge. Thus religion implies all the eight steps including spirituality, enlightenment, alterism and universality. As a matter of fact, religion means :-

i. Knowing the above.
ii. Observing the above in life.
iii. Observing the above with faith.

B. Need for Religion

Normal and natural state of mind of man is to stay calm and happy. However, in actual life, mind generally remains worried, anxious and unhappy. Reasons for suffering of the mind are :

a. The sense and motor organs of man have a natural tendency to move out and entangle in persons and objects of the world to satisfy

his natural urges or to attain his social aspirations. If he is ignorant, he remains in a state of indecision and unable to decide on any action. Such inaction leads to complications. Consequently, man remains worried and he suffers.

b. If a person does not possess true knowledge or has inadequate or wrong knowledge, his decision will consequently be wrong as also his actions. So, he will suffer.

c. If a man is in delusion and too much attached to persons or objects of the world, he will crave for more and more of the same. He will continue to cross the limit of moderation. Naturally, this will harm him and he suffers.

d. If a man has pre-meditated expectations of his proposed action, his action may or may not produce the expected result. If he succeeds, his egoism and vanity continues to push him in the same direction to have greater and greater success, till he meets with failure. In case, he fails, he gets disappointed, disgusted and humiliated, and hence he suffers.

e. If his mind is not well-trained and under control, he has a hangover of past regrets and future apprehensions. He goes on brooding and brooding without reaching anywhere. Such hangover is the cause of great suffering and torture.

Religion tells man the ways to avoid such suffering and also the path to end such suffering. Religion also guides man to the road to happiness. That is why, man turns to religion. Those who do not take the refuge of religion, they take to alcohol, drugs, sensuality, crime, violence and even suicide. These alternatives are worse than the disease and have a painful and tragic end. Therefore, there is a need for religion. As a matter of fact, more and more of religion is the only panacea to the sufferings of man. So far, man has not been able to search out a better alternative to religion. That is the reason for the continued popularity and universality of religion.

C. Major religions of the world

Almost all religions of the world had originated in South Asia or South West Asia. Major religions of the world are as under :–

1. Christianity.	6. Sikhism.

2. Islam.	7. Jews.
3. Hinduism.	8. Zoroastrians.
4. Buddhism.	9. Chinese Religions.
5. Jainism.	

Hinduism is by far the oldest religion of the world. It originated in north India about ten thousand years from now. But Hinduism today is not the same as it was two thousand years earlier. Special feature of Hinduism is that it had not been established by any Godman or Prophet. Then again, it has no single authoritative scripture. Nor there is nay central sacred shrine, institution or religious head. Therefore, there is great diversity and even vagueness about what Hinduism is. But, it is because of this reason that it has great resillience and flexibility.

D. Subject matter of religions

Scriptures of all religions deal with the following subjects–

a. Ultimate Reality or Lord of this universe. Almost all major religions believe in God except Buddhism and Jainism. However, all religions believe in Goodness. Attributes of God represent Goodness. In essence, all religions emphasise goodness– some reach goodness directly while others reach goodness through God. This has been discussed in detail in the chapter on God which may be read once again.

b. Universe and its nature. All religions describe in their own way how this universe had come into existence, how it is being sustained and how it is to come to an end. But, in view of the latest research of physical sciences, most of such descriptions have become irrelevant.

c. The world and its phenomena. This part has also lost its relevance in the light of the latest researches of science.

d. Man and his nature. All scriptures deal with man, his weaknesses, his limitations and his fickleness when faced with temptations, pressures and his own inner nature. This aspect has generally been presented to highlight the demonic nature of man and need not be taken at its face value. Modern psychology presents a better and more reliable assessment of man.

e. Society and relationships between individuals and individuals, individuals and groups and between groups and groups including followers of other religions. This part includes traditions and customs regarding relationships between family members, marriage, adoption, mutual disputes, property, taxes, state control, crime, punishment, etc. Manusmriti devotes a lot of space to this aspect. So also is the case with other religions.

But this aspect has now been fully taken over by the State and relevant civil and criminal laws exist on all such issues. Whatever could be made use of the scriptures for the welfare of the society has already been utilised. Now-a-days, it is not prudent to refer to the scriptures to deal with such problems. So, most of this has also become irrelevant.

f. Aims of life and how to attain them. This part deals with aims of life of man under the then existing social, economic, cultural and political circumstances. Much of it may not be convincing under the present circumstances.

g. Mythology. A huge literature has been produced during the ages by talented scholars and saints of all relifions in the form of stories, folk lore, etc. woven around the beliefs, customs and traditions of the then existing society. Most of it is interesting and a large part of it is instructive and useful. Its historicity and authenticity may be doubtful, but its literary excellence and social relevance is beyond doubt. However, it need not be taken at its face value and it may be good to clear it of its religious garb.

h. Spiritual practices. Every religion has prescribed ways of worship and approach to God or goodness so as to get rid of suffering and attain happiness. In Hinduism, several such steps have been suggested :–

i. Observance of ten components of Dharma as stated by Manu.

ii. Eight steps of Patanjali Yoga Sutra.

iii. Nine kinds of worship as mentioned in Shrimad Bhagawat:[1] Tulsidas has also mentioned nine kinds of worship in Ram Charit

1. श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनम्।
अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्म निवेदनम्।। 7.5.23(97)

Manas. Some of the more important modes of worship mentioned in almost all religions as as under–

- Repeating the name of the Lord with the help of a rosary.
- Singing the praises of the Lord all alone or in a group.
- Reading the scriptures.
- Attending a religious discourse.
- Listening to the praises of the Lord.
- Fasting.
- Noble silence.
- Pilgrimage to a holy place.
- Charity.
- Service of the poor and needy.

In Buddhism, there are ten precepts and the eightfold path. In Jainism, there are three jewels. In Islam, there are five obligations. In Christianity, there are ten commandments.

It is sometimes asked how far these observations are useful. All these observations involve some action. However, such actions are to be accompanied by simultaneous mental repetition and resolve to adhere to the goodness for which such actions are being performed. Without the mind being tagged and also made to move towards spirituality along with such actions, the formal observance of such rituals alone can not be of much avail. These observances must transform the inner self and influence one's day-to-day life accordingly. Only then, they lead to the desired goodness.

Relevance of Religion in modern times

Some thinkers have expressed doubts about the utility of religions in modern times. Some had called it an opium for the common man. One person went to the extent of saying, "If man is to live, God must die." However, such wishes have not materialised. God is still the Lord of the universe. Institutional religion has of course declined, yet individuals in their personal life still value religion and profess to abide by it.

Modern thinkers have not been able to suggest alternative effective methods of getting rid of suffering and attaining happiness. Religion is still the only alternative and the most dependable refuge

of man. Recent alternatives of alcohol, drugs, sensuality, violence, crime, etc. adopted by modern youth are worse and have done lot of damage to society.

The reality is that our religions are too old. They have lot of dust which needs to be removed. The concept of God and goodness, the ways to reach goodness, the measures to control mind, the laws of happy living, the morality, the spirituality, the code of conduct, etc. are all very much relevant even today. There is no alternative to these components of religion. As a matter of fact, man today needs more of religion and more of spirituality. Of course, we need to produce a new edition of old religions. Reorientation, re-integration and re-articulation of religions is the need of the hour.

F. Religion of the future

If a new religion is to come, who will initiate it and what will be its shape. It may be useful to give some thought to these tricky questions. Religion of the future will be different from the present religions. The irrelevant part will obviously be left out. The content of religion of the future will be somewhat on the following lines :–

1. True Knowledge. The old religions had been initiated by saints, prophets or Godmen. During those days, they alone were knowledgeable persons and they presented knowledge about ultimate reality, universe, world, man and society as it existed during those days. The creators of knowledge today are– scientists, philosophers and saints. So, all the three together will have to take the initiative to formulate a framework for the new religion by presenting their respective ideas of true knowledge about ultimate reality, universe, world, man and society for the information of common man so that man has an accurate idea of the world in which he lives.

2. Rituals. All religions have prescribed some rituals. There is nothing wrong in any of the rituals except those in which violence is involved. Such rituals from all religions may be compiled and an individual may select a number of rituals out of them which he can observe in his personal circumstances. The important elements in observance of rituals are :–

a. Keeping in mind the purpose for which the ritual is being performed.
b. Observing the ritual in the right manner with all seriousness.

c. Observing the ritual with concentrated mind and faith.

d. Bringing about change in his day-to-day life as implied in the ritual.

3. Morality. All religions have prescribed some moral code or prescriptions and prohibitions for their followers. Most of such prescriptions are good. Such prescriptions from all religions may be compiled and recommended for observance. An individual may select out of this list those prescriptions which he chooses to observe and those prohibitions which he intends to avoid.

4. Spirituality. All religions have prescribed some useful practices for spiritual advancement. The eight steps of yoga, the eightfold path of Buddha are such steps. They purify, strengthen and activate the inner life of man and elevate man to altruism and universality. All such steps are very useful and may be compiled from all religions in a consolidated form. An individual may choose any from this list and observe the same for his emancipation.

Thus, the religion of the future will not be a matter of "take it or leave it." But every individual would be free to formulate a religion of his own from a comprehensive universal religious scripture having these four components :-

i. True knowledge about ultimate reality, universe, world, man and society.

ii. Religious rituals.

iii. Moral Code.

iv. Spiritual Practices.

Every individual will have the liberty to decide for himself what his religion is going to be. He will be more clear about his beliefs and practices. Consequently, he could be expected to adhere to them more sincerely and faithfully. Such a new religious order will be both in the interest of the individual as well as in the interest of the society. Incidentally, such an exercise can be undertaken by any body even now without any difficulty or embarassment. There is no copyright of religious practices.

Summary

1. Religion is an integral part of the life of all individuals.
2. All major religions of the world deal with fundamental

questions of ultimate reality, universe, world, man and society.

3. All religions prescribe for their followers an identity, rituals, morality, knowledge, spirituality, enlightenment, altruism and universality.
4. Most of the rituals, morality, spirituality, altruism and universality in different religions are almost the same with differences in terminology and minor details.
5. The rituals, customs, traditions, inter-relationships and code of conduct in most religions differ because of the differences in the geographical and historical circumstances of the times and cultures in which those religions originated.
6. There is a need to separate religion and spirituality and prepare a framework of a new religion based on spirituality alone.
7. Religion should be a personal affair giving freedom to every individual to chose such spiritual practices from different religions as suit his inherent nature, tempermanent, age and environmental circumstances.

Questions

1. What are the religious rituals which you observe? Mention any five.
2. What is the meaning of spirituality?
3. Mention some spiritual practices which you would like to observe?
4. What are the essential components of a religion?
5. What is the relevance of religion in modern times?

VII Transformation of Self and Society

Transformation of Self

A. Meaning of transformation.

Transformation means change for the better. Man lives his early life on the foundations of his inheritance and under the influence of his physical and social environment. As a helpless and totally

dependent entity, he grows and develops his personality under the influences of his parents, other members of the family, peer groups, neighbours, teachers and others. By the time, he begins to take charge of his life, he is almost well structured. Since no individual is lucky in having ideal circumstances, several short-comings and even aberrations creep into his personality development. When the individual comes to know of his limitations and short comings, he must try to improve himself through his personal volitional efforts. This process of self-improvement or further development is called transformation of the Self.

B. Implication of transformation of Self.

Transformation of Self needs to the carried out in all the aspects of life. It has been stated in section P of chapter V of part IV on Man what is meant by improvement. With the help of these indicators it, can easily be assessed whether transformation of the self is taking place or not.

Section N of chapter V indicates the directions in which one has to move to ensure his improvement. These directions are as under :–

a. Faster modernisation.

b. Deeper spiritualisation

c. Wider interaction in society.

d. Soaring aspirations for a better future.

e. Feeling pride in being a member of the society.

When an individual resolves to improve himself, he must assess his present status on the twenty one points mentioned in section P and decide which particular aspects and points need his special attention. Accordingly, he should chart out a programme of transformation of his Self.

C. Man and his environment.

Modern psychology tells us that personality or Self is a function of heredity and environment. Heredity implies the original capital at birth and environment means the enveloping factors around man which subsequently influence the transformation of the original capital. Let us see what the components of these two factors are and how they can be developed.

a. Original Capital or Inheritance.

The original capital consists of the following two parts :

i. Physical. Physical component consists of the body, its organs, their structure and growth, particular level of energy, the physiological systems, operational efficiency of the systems and the other physical features. Most of these components are in a dormant state. It is believed that they are inherited from parents. The physical part also consists of the particles of five elements namely earth, water, fire, air and ether. These five elements provide solidity liquidity, luminosity, mobility and porosity to the body.

ii. Psychological. Psychological component consists of psychological equipment of sensory faculties, mind, intellect, ego and unconscious in a dormant state. This equipment is saturated with a set of thoughts, ideas, emotions, feelings and mental tendencies of specific intensity. But all these are in a dormant state. The whole psychological apparatus and its content grows and develops with age and nutrition. Some people believe that they constitute the Karmic Baggage carried forward by the Self from its previous lives. They consider this Karmic Baggage to be the real Self. Others feel that they are inherited from parents and further enriched during pregnancy period by the environment of the family.

Whatever it may be, the two together constitute original capital or inheritance of the Self at the time of birth. After birth, the physical component grows depending upon the nature of intake of the five elements namely earth, water, fire, air and ether in the form of food and drinks and operational efficiency of the physical components. The psychological equipment also feeds on the energy produced by the intake. The content of the psychological aspect namely thoughts, ideas, emotions, feelings and sensations manifest themselves in the form of mental tendencies, habits and life-style.

b. The Environment : This original capital at birth is covered by skin, which is known as the Pranic field or the first boundary which separates the individual from the rest of the universe. This constitute s the inner environment of the Self.

The inner environment consists of the metabolic system, the physiological systems, their level of operational efficiency, the energy level, the psychological systems, their operational efficiency

level, the quality of ideas, emotions, feelings etc.

c. Auric Field : The second band of environment of man is constituted by the outer enveloping environment and it is supposed to exist all around the body. The individual radiates its psychological content through utterances, gestures, actions etc into this auric field. The toxic physical component is also released from the body through the pores in the skin into these fields in the form of sweating, evaporation, excretion and radiation of the five elements. It is stated in some scriptures that the auric field normally extends all around the body upto a distance of twenty six feet. However, its range may differ from person to persons depending upon the quality of his Self.

The Auric field consists of the following two component :

i. Physical component. It consists of elementary particles of earth, water, fire, air and ether having their respective qualities namely smell, flavour, colour, sensation and sound. They form the physical environment around the individual. These elements can be either in their pure and healthful form or in a polluted and harmful form. They enter into the individual through intake of food, drinks, breathing and respiration. These outside physical elements interact with the physical component inside the Pranic field and transform the same accordingly.

ii. Psychological Component. The second component of the Auric Field of the individual consists of infinite number of energy particles of thoughts, ideas, emotions, feelings and sensations which continue to float in the environment waiting to be attracted towards thoughts, ideas, emotions, feelings and sensations inside the body. These thoughts etc in the auric field are the radiated thoughts etc of the people residing within or crossing the auric field. These thoughts etc. can be broadly divided into two categories.

- Positive, helpful, virtuous, good, constructive.
- Negative, harmful, vicious, bad, destructive.

But out of these two categories, an individual will attract only such thoughts from the auric field as are currently active within his body at that time. This outer environmental component greatly influences one's own internal psychological component.

iii. Social Component

This component is constituted by the members of the family, peer groups, friends and other significant persons with whom the individual frequently and intimately interacts. During such inter actions, they radiate their own thoughts, ideas, emotions, feelings and sensations which greatly affect the individual's own such components. One is likely to be moulded on the pattern of the persons whose company he keeps.

d. Outer field.

13. Beyond the auric field is the outer field which has the same components as the auric filed. But the effect of these components is comparatively less. Greater the physical distance of a component from the individual, lesser the effect of the same on the individual.

D. Process of Transformation

Various steps necessary for transformation of the Self have been stated in section M, N and O of chapter V of Part IV. It will be useful to read them again. However, they could be recapitulated here once again :-

a. For physical aspect

i. Purifying the physical environment of pollution to the extent possible.

ii. Taking of nutritious diet

iii. Practice of Yoga

b. For psychological aspect

i. Constant awareness of one's own thoughts, ideas, emotions, feelings, and sensations and avoid negative, vicious and destructive thoughts.

ii. Acquisition of true knowledge.

iii. Introspection or contact with Divine Mind.

iv. Development of virtuous mental tendencies.

v. Development of one's potential abilities.

c. For social aspect

i. Good company.

ii. Development of desirable habits.

iii. Regulated and disciplined life.

iv. Appropriate life-style.

v. Performance of one's ordained duties.

d. For spiritual aspect

i. Faith in God and Self

ii. Prayer and worship

iii. Service and sacrifice for a good cause.

Apart from these steps, the other most important steps are as under :–

a. A resolve for self-improvement. There is always scope in the life of every person for improvement. Therefore, every individual whatever be his circumstances should make a solemn resolve to improve his Self on the lines stated above. If he himself does not make such a resolve, even the whole world cannot bring about any improvement in the individual. Why should anybody else think about any improvement in him if he himself is not keen for it? Only thus he will be his best friend. Therefore, making a solemn resolve for self-improvement is the first crucial step.

b. Detailed time-bound programme for self-improvement. The second step is to analyse his strengths and weakneses and note down areas in which improvement is most urgently needed. An individual should check his position relating to each item mentioned in sections M, N, and P on Man in Part IV and the points mentioned above. He should see what and what can he do under his special circumstances.

c. Volitional effort with determination to implement the programme. The body should not be allowed to rest or resist and should be made to follow the programme in right earnest. Only those who make effort and persist, they succeed.

Self-improvement is the road to happiness and getting rid of suffering. It is necessary for efficient performance of ordained duties. It is not only a personal duty but also a social obligation. It is the basic Dharma of every individual.

Transformation of the society

E. Concept of society

Like an individual, the society also has its personality which it carries forward from age to age. Society is a group of people residing in a definite territory and sharing something in common among all its members. The ancient societies were small, homogeneous, based on race or religion or some other common core. Societies today are very big, heterogeneous, living in a well defined territory and having a common constitution. This has become necessary because of the concept of nation-state. Naturally, a nation may consist of a number of social groups having their separate identity or personality. However, all these societies of a nation-state have something in common– may be a very small common core. Further, there is a sincere and persistent effort to augment this common core and achieve an integration of the different social groups. Broadly speaking the aims of modern nation-states are as under :

a. Cultural Aims.

i. Peace

ii. Harmony

iii. Happiness

iv. Salvation

b. Civilisational Aims.

i. Health

ii. Knowledge

iii. Prosperity

iv. Social justice

v. Progress

F. Society and culture

Every society has its own interpretation and implications of these aims and accordingly it pursues them. Even within a society, various sub-groups may have somewhat different interpretation of one or more of these aims. The sum total of the interpretations and implications of these eight concepts is loosely called culture of the group. Obviously, the culture of different social groups are different, though different cultures may have much in common. This culture

can be called the collective unconscious of that social group which it carries from one age to another age and passes on from one generation to another.

This culture of the group had evolved through a long period against the geographical and historical background of that group. Every generation makes its contribution to its existing culture and further enriches and modifies it. Thus the evolution of the culture of the group goes on. But the process of evolution is very slow. Although there is a need for its periodical review and bring about modifications because of the changes in the social, political and economic conditions of the society. Yet there is no such in-built mechanism in any society to bring about such transformation. Culture can in a sense be called the collective Karmic Baggage of that social group. It needs volitional effort for its improvement like an individual. In comparison with the improvement in the self of an individual, the improvement in society is more difficult and needs Herculean efforts. Therefore, all cultures suffer from a cultural lag and that accounts for the conservative nature of cultures. Let us see why it is so.

G. Components of society and its culture

Every social group big or small consists of the following three components.

a. Structure

b. Cultural or Social Karmic Baggage

c. Custodians of culture

a. **Structure** Every society has a structure with different layers of classes having well defined rights and duties. They represent a hierarchy, some having more privileges while others have less privileges and are considered as inferior. This classification may be based on birth or acquired social status. There may be two or more such layers in a society.

b. Cultural or Social Karmic Baggage

Culture consists of the following components :–

i. Thoughts, ideas, emotions, feelings, beliefs etc. regarding God, universe, man, society, true knowledge, aims of life and the ways to achieve those aims.

ii. Laws, scriptures, conventions, codes, rules etc. based on the thought content.
iii. Customs traditions, rituals etc.
iv. Life-style based on the above.

c. Custodians of culture

Preservation and enrichment of culture is the responsibility of social, cultural, economic, political, religious and other institutions in accordance with the scriptures, constitution, codes etc. from which they draw their legitimacy. In actual practice the authority for such control is exercised by the office-bearers and leaders of such institutions of the society. During different periods of history, this authority has been exercised by leaders of different groups. In ancient times, religious leaders were all- powerful. To-day, this authority is being exercised mainly by the leaders of political institutions and to some extent by the leaders of other categories of institutions– religious, economic, social etc.

H. Transformation of a society

It is obvious that all societies always need transformation because through the passage of time, some elements of the culture become obsolete and even obstructive and harmful. Unscrupulous and vicious members of the society misinterpret the existing traditions and conventions. Because of the authority which they exercise at that time, they resort to exploitation of the common man. Consequently, corruption, injustice, inefficiency and stagnation creeps in. The weak, the deprived and the under-privileged suffer. This obstructs the progress of the society. So some corrective action must be initiated.

However, the structure of the society is so rigid and the vested interests of the society acquire so much authority that it is very difficult to dislodge them and transform the society. The vested interests wield so much social, economic, religious and political power that any change becomes almost impossible. The situation goes on declining from bad to worse, but nothing happens. Even the honest and well-intentioned individuals feel helpless. In sheer frustration, many join the exploitative forces and the situation goes beyond control. This is the story of almost all socieites today. It intends to change but it changes not.

I. Role of an individual in the transformation of society

An individual has very limited role in the transformation of society. The structure and culture of the society are monopolised by institutions and their office-bearers who are very well entrenched and have huge resources in comparison to those of an individual. Also several institutions have identical interests and their combined strength is simply too much for any individual to face or challenge. So, in most cases an individual cannot transform the society. Only a number of institutions and their office-bearers can challenge the vested interests and initiate a compaign for transformation of the society. But there are certain conditions for such a compaign to succeed :–

a. The proposed change should conform to the Divine law. The Divine law requires that the new measure should :–

i. Promote happiness

ii. Help in the development of potential abilities of man.

iii. Enable men to fulfil their ordained obligations.

iv. Promote love and harmony among men.

v. Should conform to laws of nature.

b. A good number of office-bearers of different institutions and the leaders of the society should resolve to bring about the transformation by introducing the proposed changes and incorporate them in the relevant authorised documents.

c. The matter should be pursued for a long time with determination by the concerned leaders.

Normally, an individual should limit himself to the following regarding transformation of the society.

i. Contact his Divine Mind and decide for himself what the right course for him in the existing situation is.
ii. Follow to the extent possible what he considers to be right.
iii. Keep distance to the extent possible from what is wrong.
iv. Support all efforts to the extent possible to promote what is right.
v. Wherever he has the right to vote for election of his representative to an institution, he should vote for the

person most competent to bring about the desired transformation disregarding all other considerations like, race, caste, religion, region, etc.

If the individual remains dissatisfied with the above, he should join some concerned institution, develop in himself the required competencies, assume leadership by becoming an office-bearer of some powerful institution and lead the campaign. But this requires great commitment, sacrifice and prolonged struggle for the cause. If he feels he can, he must.

Summary

1. There is always sufficient scope for every individual to improve himself.

2. It is the personal duty and social obligation of every individual to improve himself in those areas where he feels the need for such improvement.

3. For self-improvement, the following steps are necessary :

   a. A solemn resolve for self-improvement.

   b. A programme for self-improvement.

   c. Sustained and determined volitional effort according to the time schedule.

4. Improvement in society and its culture is also necessary because of the changes in social, economic and political circumstances.

5. Improvement in society is more difficult than improvement in an individual.

6. The responsibility for improvement in society rests with the leaders of the society.

7. An individual should do the right and be always prepared to support the right.

Questions

1. Carry out an introspection exercise and identify a few aspect where improvement is needed most. Prepare a time bound programme for the same and implement it.

2. State a few improvements which are urgently needed in your society.

VIII Conclusion

1. God is the master of this universe. He is the creator and sustainer of the universe. He is the source of bliss, wisdom and love. Man has forgotten God, His laws and His commandments. So man is unhappy and is suffering. The Gita advises Man to go back to God and seek His refuge. This is as true to-day as it was during the days of the Mahabharat. This is the greatest need for today.
2. Universe and its objects have an irresistible attraction for man. But the nature of worldly objects is such that they give pleasure only upto a point. Beyond that limit, they begin to inflict pain on man. Man has forgotten this characteristic nature of worldly objects and he has developed greed and craving for unlimited pleasure of the senses from the worldly objects. The Gita advises man to understand this curvilinear nature of worldly objects and enjoy them with moderation upto a legitimate limit and not entangle himself in pleasures of the senses beyond that point.
3. However, the world is real and not an illusion. It is not evil or vicious. It is attractive and beautiful. It is worth living and worth enjoyment. One must live his life in the world in full measures, establish harmonious relationships, participate in its phenomena, fulfil his obligations, have worldly aspirations, do his best to attain those aspirations, make his contribution to society, lead his life with dedication and love and fade away from this world with happiness.
4. Man is endowed at birth with the followings :
   a. An antecedent subtle body composed of dormant thoughts, ideas, feelings, emotions and desires which crave for manifestation and satisfaction. This subtle body must be allowed to develop and prosper.
   b. A subtle dormant apparatus consisting of mind, intellect, ego and the unconscious which have great potentiality of development. This equipment must be developed to lead a productive life and enjoy one's stay in this world.
   c. A set of dormant mental tendencies, some of which are virtuous, some neutral and some vicious. Man should

develop the virtuous and neutral mental tendencies which will lead him to happiness. Man should starve and subdue the vicious mental tendencies which can lead him to suffering. Parents, teachers and society should help the child in early years of life to do so.

5. It it expected of man :
   a. to develop his potential abilities of mind, intellect, ego and unconscious to the optimum level.
   b. to allow legitimate and limited manifestation of natural urges and worldly aspirations and not ignore them or suppress them.
   c. to develop virtuous mental tendencies by
      i. acquiring true knowledge through the study of scriptures.
      ii. keeping company of the saintly persons.
      iii. developing desirable habits.
      iv. following the path of yoga.
      v. Adopting an appropriate life style.
   d. to comply with the commandments of God.

6. Man is born in society, is brought up by the society and he lives in society. During his interaction with other members of the society, he establishes his relationships with them. Some of such relationships are obligatory as family relationships while others are voluntary as relationships with friends and neighbours. These relationships confer on him some rights and impose on him some duties which are ordained. Man should fulfil such ordained duties to the best of his capacity. Neglect of such duties is sinful.

7. God is sitting inside every person as Divine Mind. Man should remain in contact with this Divine Mind during meditation and seek its advice whenever in doubt or suspense.

8. Apart from the bigger society, man has a small social circle comprising of his family members, other relations, friends, neighbours, colleagues at work place etc. This is his own social circle. He should be an active, participative,

responsible and productive member of this group and make his valuable contribution for its progress and prosperity. He should enjoy membership of his society.

9. There are four important aspects of man's life - physical, psychological, social and spiritual. Man should look after all the four aspects of his life equally and maintain a balance in the development of all the four aspects. Only then he can be happy. Neglect of any will lead to suffering.
10. Man should acquire adequate knowledge about God, universe, man, society etc. to solve his day-to-day life problems and achieve his worldly ambitions. He should not shy away or run away from the battlefield of life under any circumstance.
11. Man should have total and implicit faith in God and in himself. He should strengthen this faith by following the path of Dharma and succeed in life.
12. Man should practise the path of yoga and perform acts of public good in a spirit of service and sacrifice.
13. From his busy daily schedule, man must find ten to fifteen minutes to remember God. During this period; he should present himself in His court and faithfully present an account of his daily activities and seek His blessings. During those precious minutes, he should converse with his Divine Mind and seek guidance from Him.
14. Man should never degrade himself even in the face of temptations, pressures and difficulties. He should make his life sublime.
15. Man should write his own Gita, own Bible, own Quran, own Dhammapada, own scripture on the basis of his own life experiences which should guide him in his life as a pole-star. He should follow the prescription of this Gita with conviction and courage and lead a happy, contented, successful and peaceful life.

An example of such as affirmation is given here.

This is the only way. There is no other way. Only thus man will be happy. Only thus at the end of his life, he shall be able to fade away with a sense of satisfaction and bliss.

Affirmation

1. I firmly believe in the existence of God. My God is omni-present, omni-potent and omniscient. He is the lord of this universe. He sustains this universe through His cosmic forces which operate according to His Cosmic Divine laws. These Divine Laws are eternal, universal and infallible. The three attributes of God are Bliss, Wisdom and Love. All the three represent goodness. God manifests Himself in this universe through His three attributes. Wherever and in whatever, we find His goodness– Bliss, Wisdom and Love, that is surely a manifestation of God. Bliss affects the mind and creates inner peace and happiness; Wisdom affects intellect and results in worldly success; Love affects my ego and creates harmony in social relationships. All the three are good for me. So, God represents goodness. If we abide with goodness, we abide with God. Nearer we are to goodness, nearer we are to God. This is how I realise my God. My God resides in me in the form of my Divine Mind. My Divine Mind is an incarnation of God. I remain in contact with my Divine Mind and I feel that I am with God. I seek His guidance and obey Him. Thus He keeps me on the right path and I am saved from all sufferings. This is how I keep contact with my God and how my God helps me in my day-to-day life.

2. I believe that I am a fellow traveller in this universe for a specific period of time. During my stay here, I have every right to enjoy the pleasures of this world. I believe that the objects of this world are real and not an illusion. However, they are to be enjoyed with moderation and discretion. The world is characterised by constant change, eternity, diversity, consistency and co-existence. I respect and accept the world as it is.

I believe that it is desirable to have worldly aspirations of name fame, wealth and progeny and one should do his best to fulfil such aspirations.

I believe that the world is attractive and beneficial. One shoul entangle himself in worldly affairs and make his contribution.

3. I believe that man is divine and blessed with great potentialitie One must develop his potential capacities and abilities to t optimum and he should continue to do so upto the last breath of h life.

4. I believe that it is legitimate to satisfy my natural urges upto a reasonable extent. It is futile to try to suppress them.

5. I believe that all the four aspects of my life– physical, psychological, social and spiritual are equally important. None of them should be ignored and a balance must be maintained in their development I believe that man should subdue his vicious mental tendencies, strengthen his virtuous mental tendencies, inculcate desirable habits and adopt a life-style appropriate to his social status. Enjoyment of well-earned blessing of the world is desirable.

6. I believe that it is the primary duty of every person to improve himself through his volitional effort and perform his ordained duties seriously and sincerely.

7. I believe that society is a divine organisation. One must accept and respect its prohibitions and prescriptions unless they are in contradiction to the Divine law and my personal development. One must actively participate in social and cultural activities and make his contribution towards enrichment of the social culture.

8. I believe that one should accept only that information which is validated by scientific methods, well established academic authorities or personal experience. Authority of religion, tradition, scripture, or godmen should not be blindly accepted and followed.

9. I believe that happiness is the birth right of every person and he should try to attain happiness through the following :–

a. Development of one's potential faculties.
b. Performance of one's ordained duties with a detached mind.
c. Having faith in God and in himself.
d. Practice of eight steps of yoga.
e. Performance of social service through the five maha-yajnas.
f. Observance of one's Dharma in accordance with his age and circumstances.

10. I affirm my faith in my above beliefs and resolve to lead my life by adhering to them.

* * *

Secrets of Happy Living

1. The first secret of happy living is to always abide with goodness. It is entirely in your hands to do so.

2. The second secret of happy living is to remain constantly in touch with your Divine Mind and follow its dictates

3. The third secret of happy living is to always remember that the moment of death is sure and certain to come and that moment cannot be avoided under any circumstance.

4. The fourth secret of happy living is to have implicit faith in retributive justice of Law of Karma which is infallible.

5. The fifth secret of happy living is to always remember that nothing in this world permanently belongs to you. However, you have the right to enjoy the pleasure of this world, but that too with moderation and restraint.

6. The sixth secret of happy living is to exercise control on your mind and never be carried away by emotions.

7. The seventh secret of happy living is to remember that you can be really happy only if people around you are also happy.

Therefore

With or without the help of others, **develop your Self in its true form** and **right functions** and lead your **life** in a spirit of **dedication** and **love.**

Appendix- I

Different names of Lord Krishna used in the Gita

1. Sri Krishna	One who attracts everybody.
2. Madhusudan	The killer of the demon "Madhu"
3. Yashoda Nandan	One who pleases Yashoda-his foster-mother
4. Devki Nandan	One who pleases his mother Devki
5. Yogeshwar	One who is supreme in yoga.
6. Hrishikesh	One who had awakened the latent powers of Arjun
7. Janardan	One who relieves people of their suffering

Different names of Arjun used in the Gita

1. Kapidhwaj	One who has the flag with the image of Hanuman on his battle chariot.
2. Parth	The son of Pritha (Kunti), the daughter of king Prithu.
3. Kaunteya	The son of Kunti, another name of Pritha.
4. Dhananjaya	The conquerer.
5. Gudakesh	One who has full control over 'sleep'
6. Savya Sachin	One who could use the bow with both his hands.
7. Arjun	One who is pure
8. Bhartrshabh	Supreme in Bharat Dynasty
9. Anagh	Without any sin.
10. Mahabaho	Man with long arms. Vary powerful
11. Bharat	A descendent of Bharat Dynasty
12. Kurunandan	Beloved of Kuru Dynasty
13. Parantap	One who punishes the enemies.

Appendix II

Subject matter of the Gita

Details of subject matter on the topics in Part IV and Part V as contained in different chapters of Gita.

S. No.	Subject	Chapters and shlokas
Part-IV		
1.	God	1.17 4.6-13 6.24-31 8.9,20-22 9.13-19 10.4,5,26-39,43 11.10-31,53-55 12.2-20 13.12-17
2.	Universe	4.17-19, 7.3-11 8.3,4 9.5-10 10.6-8 13.5,6 14.3,4 18.1-3
3.	Maya	3.27-43 4.6 7.12-15,20-23, 13.19-21 14.5-20, 22,23 15.12-16
4.	Man	2.13-15,18-25,28-30 4.37,40-45 8.5,6 9.20-25, 10.11,20, 13.11,17,22,31,33, 15.7-11 16.1-9 18.60-61
5.	Society	4.3 18.41-49
6.	Knowledge	4.33-39 7.66-69 9.2 18.20-22
Part V		
1.	Suffering	1.29-46
2.	Niskham Kama	2.4,6,7,33-41,45-53, 3.5-7,19-26 4.19-23 5.6-12 6.3-6
3.	Faith	4.40-42, 6.46,47 7.21-24, 9.29-34
4.	Yajna	3.10-16, 4.24-32
5.	Yoga	2.55- 58 5.19-28 6.11-25,35,36 8.10,12-15
6.	Dharma	17.7-28 18.26-39,51-53

Appendix III

Details of shlokas

Chapter	Shlokas	Total
1	1 38 39 45 47	(5)
2	2 11 13 20 22 23 24 33 34 38 47 48 50 51 53 55 58 61 62 63 67	(21)
3	5 6 7 8 16 19 21 26 33 34 36 37 40 41 42 43	(16)
4	7 8 11 13 19 21 38 39 40 42	(10)
5	7 10 12 25 27 28	(6)
6	5 6 11 12 13 14 17 19 26 34 35 37 41 43 45 46	(16)
7	3 4 5 6 13 16 17	(7)
8	6 10 12 13	(4)
9	7 25	(2)
10	8 9 20 41	(4)
11	4 5	(2)
12	1 2 3 4 5 13 14	(7)
13	1-a 1 20 27	(4)
14	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 16 17	(11)
15	5 16	(2)
16	1 2 3 4 21 23	(6)
17	1 2 3 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 28	(20)
18	1 5 6 7 23 24 25 26 27 28 36 37 38 39 41 42 43 44 47 48 51 52 53 63 66	(25)
	Total	168

Some opinions about the book

1. The book prompts introspection. **Prof. S.R. Bhatt**
2. Written in a simple, straight-forward, easy to understand and engaging fashion. **Shri S.N. Gupta**
3. Depth of the philosophy of the Gita is presented in an engaging manner. **Prof. R.P. Sharma**
4. Can inspire the young generation towards values of Indian faith. **Prof. Shashi Tiwari**
5. Conveys very useful and thoughtful messages in a comprehensible and easy to understand manner. **Km. Richa Singh**
6. The book avoids both extremism and fundamentalism of every Kind. **Smt. Vanita Sharma**
7. Highly balanced in its outlook in as much as it takes care of all aspects of life physical, ideational and spiritual. **Dr. S.C. Goswami**
8. The book is heavily laden with novel ideas. It presents an integrated approach to problems of life combining science and spirituality both together in a measured way. **Shri Q.L. Bagga**
9. Expounds a practical and comprehensive philosophy of life highly useful for the students as well as common man entering the field of life. **Dr. K.K. Wadhwa**
10. Analysis of the reality of the universe in this book has stimulated me to go further in explaining the process of consciousness somewhat on the basis of Buddha, Patanjali or Shaivism involved in the making of the reality in terms of consciousness. **Prof. S.P. Singh**

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